INTERVIEW
JEFFREY
DEAN MORGAN

Words: Bryan Cairns

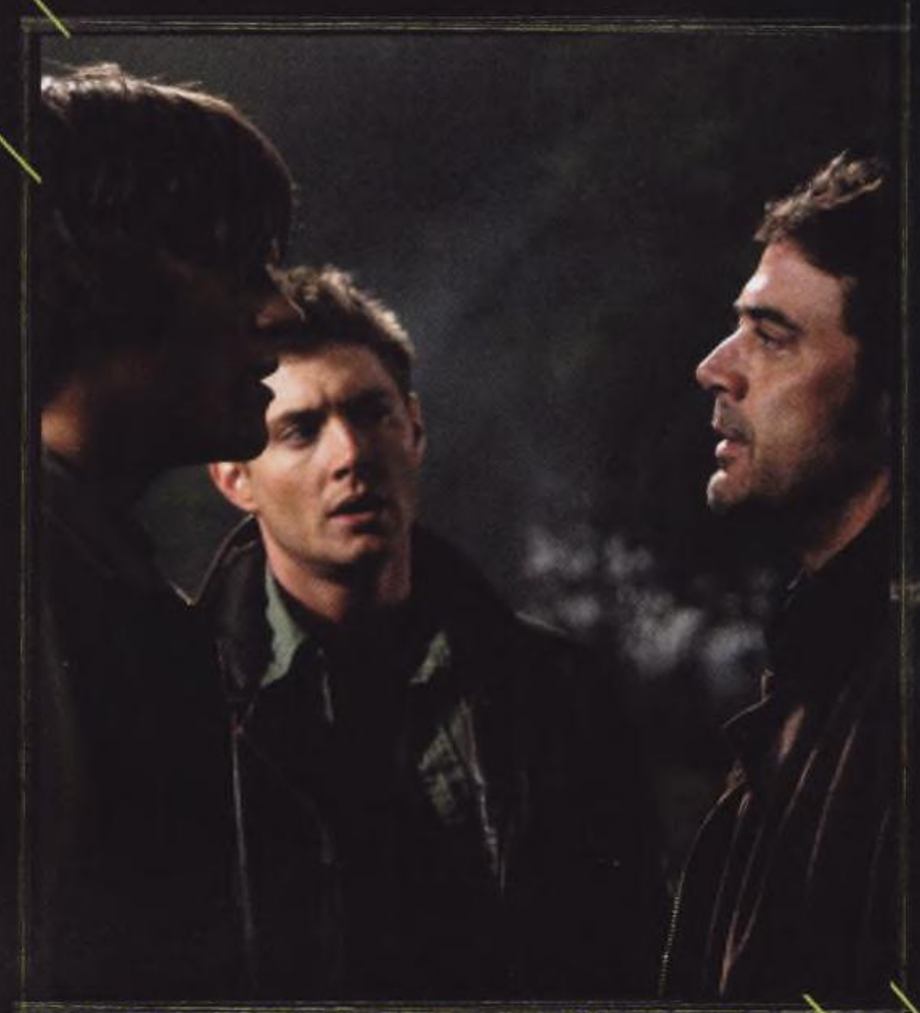
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER

Although he didn't always follow the happy families rulebook, John Winchester nonetheless had his sons' best interests at heart. Indeed, he gave his life to save Dean. In an exclusive interview with *The Official Supernatural Magazine*, actor JEFFREY DEAN MORGAN reveals why, even in death, John's legacy lives on.

As the rough and more-than-a-little gruff John Winchester, actor Jeffrey Dean Morgan was anything but a typical father to sons' Sam and Dean. In fact, when Sam told his dad he was scared of the thing in his closet, John gave him a .45. Then again, John had every reason to be fearful after his beloved wife Mary was slaughtered at the hands of the Yellow-Eyed Demon (*Pilot*). Rather than lose another member of his family to this supernatural fiend, John sacrificed his own life to save Dean's (*In My Time Of Dying*), before rising from Hell itself to rescue the boys once more (*All Hell Breaks Loose, Pt.2*).

Currently filming *Watchmen* in Vancouver, Morgan (who has more than 35 TV shows and movies to his name) took time out of his busy schedule to sit down and chat with *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about John Winchester's epic arc. And boy, was it epic...

The Official Supernatural Magazine: **How did you get the part of John Winchester?**
Jeffrey Dean Morgan: When I did the pilot,



"AT THE CORE OF IT, JOHN WAS A GOOD FATHER. HE LOVED HIS KIDS MORE THAN HE LOVED HIMSELF!"

I didn't know I was going to come back. Sam and Dean were just children in the scenes I shot, and I figured they would hire a guy that was an older version of myself [for the actual series]. How can I have kids who are Jensen Ackles' age for God's sakes, or Jared Padalecki's size? So I really didn't expect anymore than that.

When I did come back, I was really happy for a gig. Besides that, I just love those two kids. I call Jensen and Jared "kids" now because I'm their dad. They are two of the coolest, most well-adjusted, greatest guys you will ever meet in your life. It was a great pilot, and David Nutter, who directed it, was brilliant.

Knowing Jared and Jensen's sense of humor, did they tease you about portraying their father when you're barely 10 years older than them?
Of course! Wouldn't you? We all laughed about it, but I got a lot of crap from them all the time. I still do. I get a text message from them saying "Hi Daddy!" or "How is our dead daddy doing?" Oddly enough, *Watchmen* is shooting on the same block as *Supernatural,* so I will see them every day for the next eight months. We had a lot of fun together, and there was a lot of laughing, to the point where the crew probably got a little upset with us at times. I would get the giggles, and I was so tired anyway. Jared has a tendency to get the giggles, and when you are tired and they start giggling and you start giggling, it can go on way too long. We certainly had a good time.

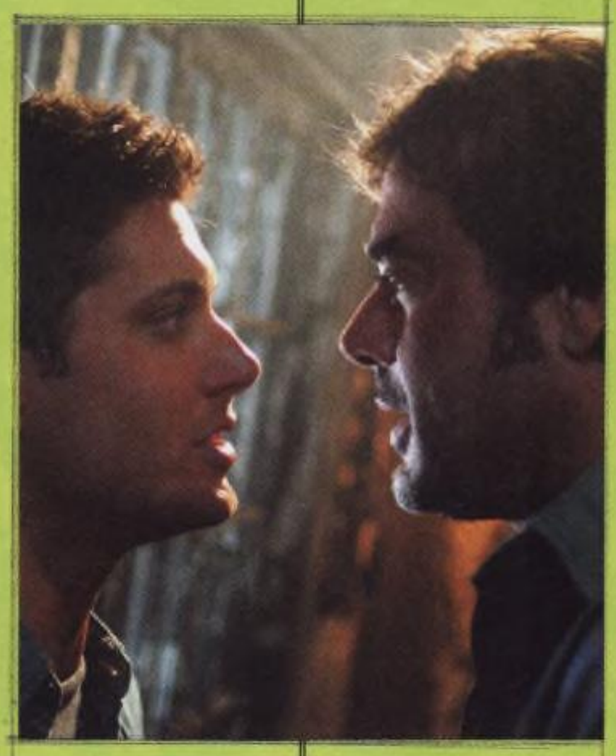
Sam and Dean had a very unusual upbringing. What kind of father was John Winchester?
At the core of it, John was a good father. He loved his kids more than he loved himself. Everything he did that was questionable, everything that most people

would look at and go, "That wasn't a very good decision on his part," he did for his sons. Perhaps there was a better way to do it, but every parent can't be a Denny Duquette [Jeffrey's character from *Grey's Anatomy*]. He had his flaws, and I loved that. That was the best part. Unfortunately, the kids are screwed up now, but I think it was always done out of love.

The season one episode *Shadow* featured quite a few special effects. Was it a learning curve dealing with imaginary menaces?
Kim Manners directed that episode, and he was so great that I was fine with it. When I finally got into the character of John Winchester, I loved it. I never had any issue with the special effects. I don't think I would want to be against a blue screen every day, but I liked doing it. I had done a series called *The Burning Zone* in the 1990s that had a lot of special effects, but they've certainly come a long way since then. It was fun. The coolest thing is seeing the episode afterward and how it's turned out. What they pull off in the CG lab is amazing!

Back in the day, John was supposed to be this badass hunter. Was it fun getting to show that side of him in the confrontation with Meg?
Yeah, I was dying to get John on his own! We had to deal with the family stuff, and there was so much apologizing, or not apologizing, that when it finally got down to kicking the crap out of some demons, it was really time! As an actor, the reason I first got into this was getting to play cowboys and Indians. John was the ultimate cowboy, so I was in heaven. Throw me against some walls, let me jump over some couches, and shoot some bad guys. I was having a blast!

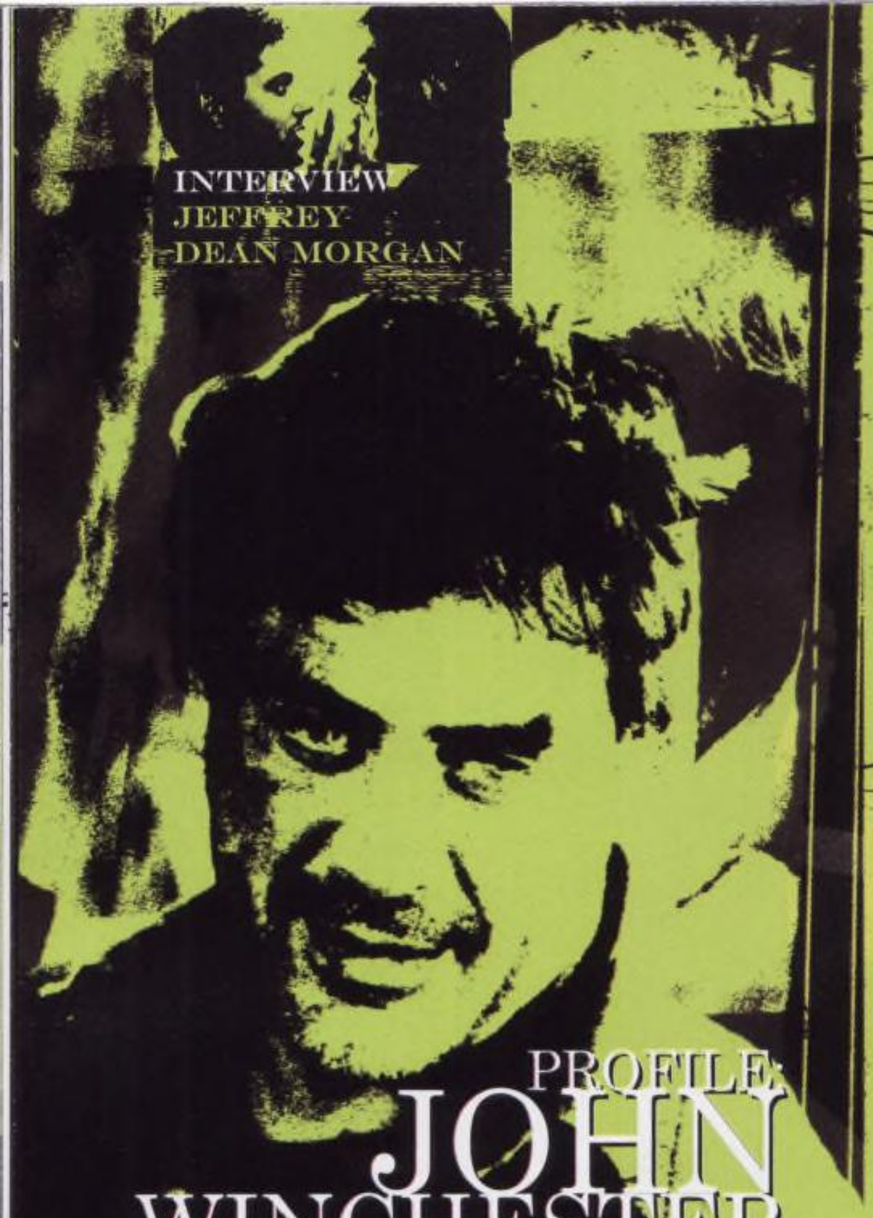
John was no slouch in hand-to-hand combat. Did you get to do any of your own stunts?
I did a lot of them... I want to say I did them *all* because that is way cooler. I had a tendency to get hurt because I am a little older. I was limping around quite a bit, which was fodder for the kids. They can make fun of that all day long. "Look at Dad! He can't even walk today!" [Laughs]. There was nothing really major; just age catching up. Bouncing off the pavement is a little harder these days!



How was it doing those scenes where John is possessed by the demon and lashes out at his sons?
Those turned out so well. They kind of let me go with it. "We just want you to be different from John", so I came up with this whole pattern of speech. What I was aiming for was a kind of Jack Nicholson in *The Shining* thing where he gets all freaky. I just changed my voice. The other thing that was important was I couldn't see anything. I had yellow contacts in, so we had sand bags placed all over the room. That is how I knew where I was. I would hit them with my foot and I knew I was right in front of Jensen. Then I would turn around and I would walk until I felt the sand bag with my foot again and I knew I was in front of Jared. I would wait for them to talk so I knew where I was looking. So I did that scene pretty damn near blind! I could see light sources, but I couldn't see the actors. They shot that all as one, too. My coverage was a continuous shot, so it was really a feat for the cameraman, the director, and the three of us.

In the season two premiere, *In My Time Of Dying*, John makes a deal with the Yellow-Eyed Demon to save his dying son. What was your reaction to the script?
Well, that will prove to all the naysayers that John was a good father. It showed how much John loved his kids. I was very sad to see him go. I would rather have had him ride into the sunset so I could come back whenever I was available. I was sad that he died, but it is Eric Kripke's decision. He has a grand scheme, and I read things that say there is always a possibility I could come back. We'll see. If the kids are in trouble, I hope John will somehow make himself known again.

Perhaps he can be their own private guardian angel, like Michael Landon in *Highway To Heaven*?
[Laughs] Damn straight! Only this would be a whole different take. That would be sweet.



PROFILE: JOHN WINCHESTER

Although concrete facts about his early years are few and far between, John Winchester was most likely born in 1954 in the state of Indiana. He left high school (probably without graduating) to pursue a career in the Marine Corps, where he quickly rose up the ranks to corporal. It was here that he met Deacon (the warden from *Folsom Prison Blues*) who went on to save his life (most likely during the Vietnam War). Brave and disciplined, John was awarded various medals for his years of devotion to his country, including a Bronze Star for bravery, heroism or meritorious service, the Purple Heart, and the Vietnam Service Medal.

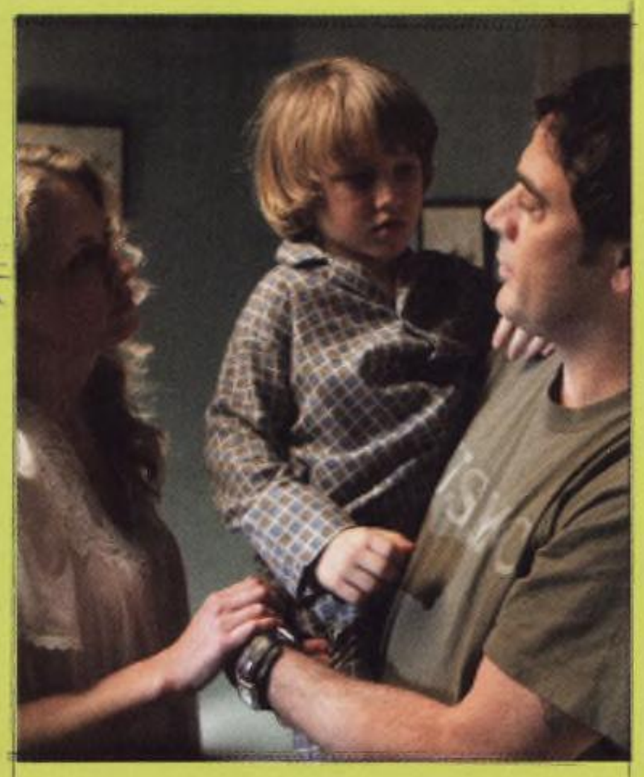
Sometime later he married Mary, and the couple had two children, Dean (born in 1979), and Sam (born in 1983). When Sam was just six months old, the Yellow-Eyed Demon killed Mary. John, who was working as a mechanic at the time, awoke to find his wife pinned to the ceiling in Sam's nursery with her abdomen split open and her body engulfed in flames. Determined to avenge Mary's death, John gave up his half of the garage which he owned with Mike Guenther in Lawrence, Kansas, to become a hunter of the supernatural, and raised his two young sons to do the same.

In 2006, John and his now fully-grown sons were involved in a horrific car accident which left Dean in a coma fighting for his life. Rather than lose his firstborn, John made a deal with the Yellow-Eyed Demon in which he sacrificed his life in order to save Dean's. He was 52.

The last time we saw John Winchester, he was escaping the depths of Hell to help his sons finally put an end to the Yellow-Eyed Demon's reign of terror. Will he be back? Don't bet against it...

How satisfying was it returning in the season two finale to finally wreak some vengeance on the demon responsible for the death of Mary Winchester?
It was great. I came back around Christmas, which was five months before they were done filming season two [Jeffrey was shooting *The Accidental Husband* in New York with Uma Thurman for most of the second half of the season and was therefore unavailable]. We filmed everything against a blue screen, because nothing was truly written yet. I think Eric actually rewrote everything because I couldn't come back whenever the finish date for the show was for the last episode. We kind of winged it, but I love that John came back. Maybe he's gone on to a better place now, but who knows with John? I will never be sold he's in Heaven resting peacefully.

Remarkably, John never utters a single word in that final confrontation...
I never had any dialogue. When I first got the script, the scene was more complex with a lot of fighting. But *The Accidental Husband* team wouldn't let me do that stuff. They were basically like, "No, you can't go up there to fight and potentially get hurt." Eric rewrote it so basically I grab the demon and he throws me off. And there was never a whole lot of dialogue. In the original, there was some, and in the second there was none. I liked it, because it allowed the three of us to connect. Those two kids are really good actors, and we had done this before. In *Shadow*, where we first see each other, it is that whole "I am happy to see you" without a lot of talking. That was the same strategy they did in this last episode, and it was very effective.



Are there any *Supernatural* episodes that really stand out for you?
I loved *Dead Man's Blood*, where the boys cut me off and I get pissed off at them. The last three episodes of season one were so much fun and serialized. I also really love *Shadow*. The last episode, where it's me and Jensen with Dean in the hospital bed, was good too. That was a bittersweet deal because I didn't know if I would be back on the show.

The *Supernatural* comic book series *Origins* focuses on the adventures of John Winchester. Have you had a chance to check them out?
I went to get the graphic novel of *Watchmen* [Jeffrey is currently filming the movie adaptation] and bought the first few issues of the *Supernatural* comic book. I haven't opened them. They are still in their plastic sleeves. I was like, "Maybe I should keep them in there and they will be worth something one day!" I should just read them, but to be honest, I don't have a whole lot of reading time right now.

That's true. At one point, you were even jetting back and forth between *Supernatural* and *Grey's Anatomy*. Was it strange appearing in two series that shared the same time slot?
[Laughs] That was a little bizarre. I was like, "What the hell is going on?" I don't know if it was a good thing or a bad thing, programming myself against myself. That only happened in the second year, though, because we had been on different nights before that. Now that they are on against each other, thank God for Tivo. I wish they would put *Supernatural* on another day because it is a tough night. *Supernatural* is a great show, and more people should be watching it. And hopefully John will be back!

Rest assured, there would be an awful lot of happy *Supernatural* fans if John were to return...
I'm [currently] up in Vancouver shooting *Watchmen* every day, so I'll be like, "Hey, I have next week off, guys! Maybe John should make an appearance?"

SAMANTHA
SMITH
INTERVIEW

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT

She may have only appeared in a few episodes, but Mary Winchester has had a huge influence on the world of *Supernatural*. After all, her death is the reason John, Sam, and Dean became hunters to begin with. We caught up with actress SAMANTHA SMITH, who plays Mary, to find out why she keeps dying on screen, what it was like finally getting to work with Jared and Jensen in season two, and whether we'll ever find out how Mary knew the Yellow-Eyed Demon...

Words: Bryan Cairns

In the beginning, *Supernatural* was this new project, so did the spooky material immediately appeal to you?

Totally. I'm a huge sci-fi fan. I'm actually a giant geek, but don't tell anyone! It's not so much horror [I'm a fan of] as sci-fi. I'm an avid *Battlestar Galactica* fan. I was in *Transformers*, too. Horror movies scare me to death, so I can't watch them at all.

So when you got the script for the *Supernatural* pilot, what interested you about the role of Mary Winchester?

Well, to be honest, when I got it, it was pilot season, so you try out for so many shows, and you take the job you get. I was thrilled to get that one, because when I went in for the audition, David Nutter was the director and he made the audition so much fun, which is such a rare occurrence. He's just a lovely guy, and all the producers were there [as well]. The audition scene was my very first scene in the pilot where I had to come in, talk to the baby, there's the demon, and then I'm on fire. It was a hilarious thing to have to do, so we had a lot of fun. I knew that the character could come back, and would have to come back in interesting ways because Mary is [basically] dead as of the first two minutes. I knew I would have to come back in flashbacks or as a ghost or something cool, so I looked forward to that.

How did they pull off Mary burning on the ceiling?

It was a special set-up where I was on the floor and it was reversed to make it look like the ceiling. They shot it from a special angle to make it not just flat on. Then they had these big fire things on either side. It was crazy, but they actually had a model of me. They built a metal cased frame of my body, then papier-mâchéd it, put it on the ceiling of an actual set, then set it on fire. I have a picture of me standing under it.

Was it unsettling seeing yourself going up in flames on screen?

Ummm... yeah. It's a little disturbing. M

mom really freaked out. She didn't like it at all, but we have a running joke that I die in almost everything I do. It's this ongoing, unexplainable phenomenon. I just keep getting killed in all kinds of gruesome ways!

Your *Supernatural* husband, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, seems to have the same problem.

Both of us just keep getting killed off [in all our projects]!

At the same time, Mary was the catalyst for Sam and Dean's demon hunting.

Yeah! There are times [on other projects] where the role is a little part with no impact. This part feels special to me. I've only been in four episodes, but I feel like I'm such a continual presence in the series. Rightly or wrongly, even though I'm barely in it, I feel like such a part of the show because of the impact Mary has on the boys. It's nice.

Were you pleased with the way the pilot turned out?

Oh, yeah. Even more so, I loved the next episode I did [*Home*], where I came back as the ghost that protected the boys. To me, that was very meaningful. That was an even smaller scene [than in the Pilot] where I had three words, but I loved the relationship between my character and the boys. I loved the way the episode was shot and how the film was so grainy. I love how everything was minimal. They don't over-explain [things], so there wasn't a lot of exposition.

And after playing "mom," you finally got to interact with Jared and Jensen...

I didn't think that was ever going to happen, because Mary is dead, so any scenes I had with the boys would be when they are little. I haven't even had any scenes with the little kids, except for in the pilot. I love Jared and Jensen. They're super fun, and it's great hanging out with them.

There was a big gap between *Home* and your next appearance, *What Is And What Should Never Be* in season two. Had they approached you in between those episodes, and was there a scheduling conflict?

There might have been one scheduling issue, but I can't remember if it was for that episode and they worked it out. It wasn't like they had been pounding down my door and I was like, "No, no!" because I would pretty much drop anything to work for Eric Kripke. I love him and would do anything [for him] work-wise. I love Vancouver and the [WGA writers'] strike screwed everything up, because who knows what season

"I DIE IN ALMOST EVERYTHING I DO. IT'S THIS ONGOING, UNEXPLAINABLE PHENOMENON. I JUST KEEP GETTING KILLED IN ALL KINDS OF GRUESOME WAYS!"

three was going to be. I don't know if they've exhausted Mary. We still need to know how *she* knew the Yellow-Eyed Demon, but I don't [necessarily] have to be present to explain all that, so I don't know what the future holds for Mary on the show or if I will even be back.

Sam, you're supposed to say "They NEED me to come back!"

Yes! I think they should call the next season *Mary: Supernatural* [*laughs*]!

Up until that point, we only had glimpses of who Mary was, and then there was *What Is And What Should Never Be*. What did we learn about her in that episode?

Mary was a much more rounded person than how I had played her before. Every scene I did before, Mary had to be the perfect mom, the perfect ethereal spirit representing something not only in the series, but to the boys. She had to represent [goodness]. In that episode, that was Dean's genie imagination. I'm still [representing] the good, but [as] more of a real person. I laugh and joke around. It was a 360-degree turnaround.

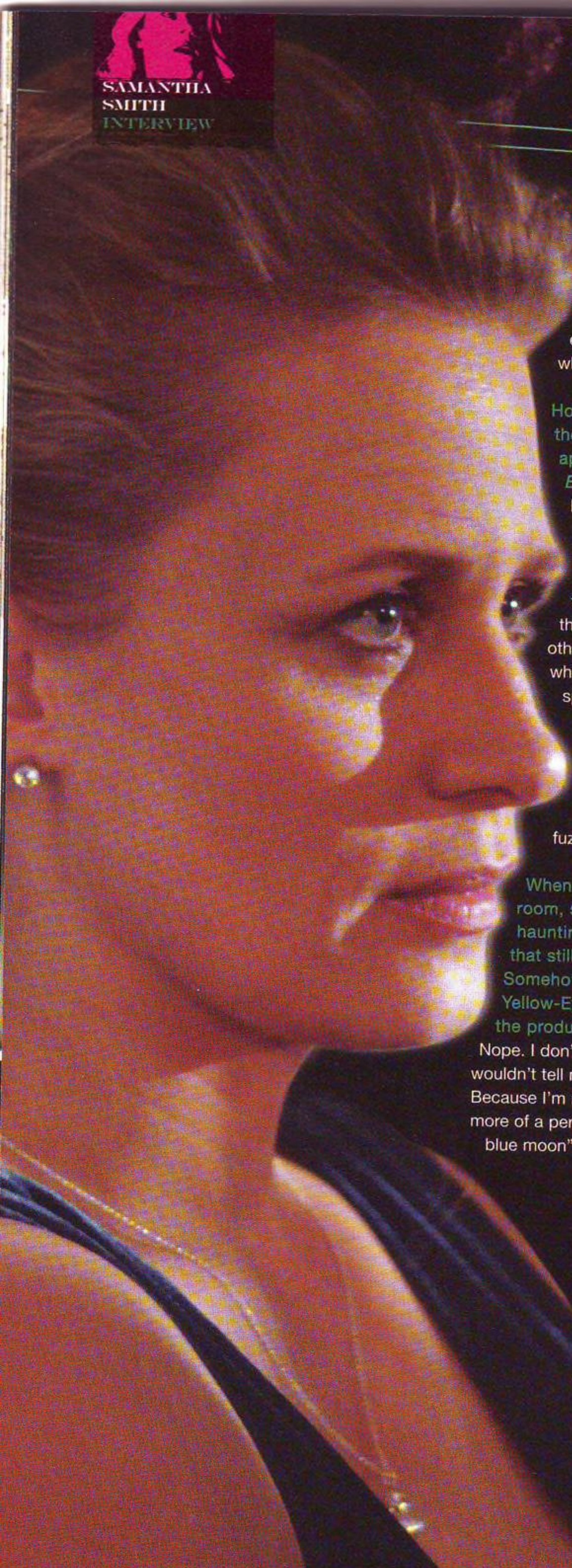
Were you thankful for all that dialogue as well?

Yes and no. It was great, and I had a lot to do. I was up [in Vancouver] for a while to do that episode. How much I have to say doesn't really matter as much as how much impact I have. I don't know how they did it, but in the first two episodes, I had so little to say, and yet Mary's impact was so great. I was grateful for how much I had to do [in my third episode], but it had to do [more] with how I influenced the story.

Mary has an emotional talk with Dean at the end of the episode, where she's trying to persuade him to remain in the dreamland.

It was very poignant and kind of a summation of his character. Everything Dean had ever wanted was right within his grasp, and he turned it down. Also, if Mary had been real in that sense, she would never have wanted that for him. That's when you knew it couldn't be real, because she would never try to convince him to do something that was detrimental [to anyone].

That episode was creator Eric Kripke's directorial



SAMANTHA SMITH
INTERVIEW

debut. How did he do as a director?
He's so intimately acquainted with the characters and he was so easy, fun, and knew [exactly] what he wanted.

How was it recreating the pilot in your next appearance, in *All Hell Breaks Loose*?
It was kind of crazy. I had a stuntwoman who did the crawling up the wall for me. It had been two or three years since I had done the pilot, so to see it from the other angles was cool, the whole "fill in the blanks" so to speak, because there was so much mystery and stuff [that was] left unsaid. I also got to reprise the nightgown. Love the polyester gown and the fuzzy slippers!

When Mary ran into baby Sam's room, she muttered two haunting words to the Demon that still stick out – "It's you!" Somehow, she recognizes the Yellow-Eyed Demon. Did you ask the producers what the deal was?
Nope. I don't ask many questions. They wouldn't tell me anyway if I did [*laughs*]! Because I'm not really in the show and more of a peripheral, "come in once in a blue moon" character, I also get to be a fan of the show. By not knowing what's going on, I get to wonder like the people who aren't involved. That's fun for me.

Mary gets slammed into the wall and lifted up by some invisible force. Was any of that actually you?
It was. In the end, the only part that's my stunt double is when I had to be put into a harness, which was a time issue. I wanted to do it, but to rig someone up in one of those harnesses takes a lot of time. When I was going up the wall, they had this cool device which is sort of a hi-tech see-saw. They had me on one side strapped in and sliding up the wall. It was cool when you see it happening because it looks very real. It was like I was doing stunts.

Do you have any standout moments from *Supernatural*?
I liked the scene in *Home* where I only have three words. I loved coming out of the fire. They actually had a guy walking in the fire suit for that, so I was very grateful not to have to do that myself! That scene was just so powerful, and I loved how it turned out. That's my favorite one so far, but I'm challenging Eric to come up with another that's just as great.

In what capacity would you like to see Mary return?
I would like to see a little bit, maybe even before Sam is born, about how I know the Yellow-Eyed Demon and more

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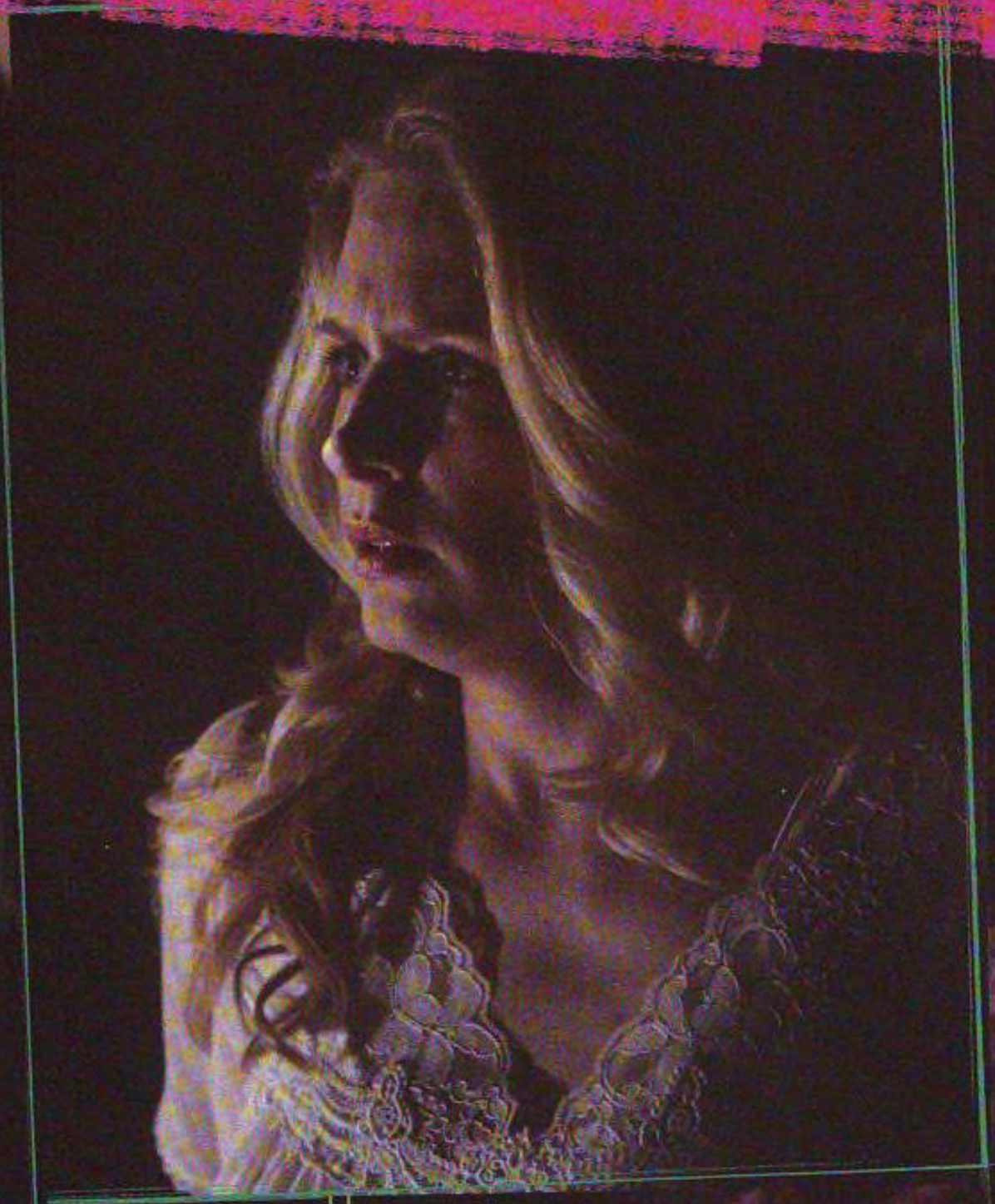
I THINK THEY SHOULD CALL THE NEXT SEASON *MARY: SUPERNATURAL!*"



of my life as a normal mom for Dean, before any of the bad stuff starts happening [to Mary]. Maybe life with my husband and just some back-story to figure out why all these things are happening [to her]. That would be helpful. And *lots* of episodes about it... maybe for the whole season!

The pilot of the show was done in Los Angeles, but does filming the rest of the series in Vancouver help to give it a certain vibe?

Supernatural, *X-Files*, and *Battlestar Galactica* [are all] well-suited to shooting in Vancouver because of the gloomy weather, the rain, the warehouses, and all the different terrain that's so readily accessible. You also have the woods that are nearby. If you moved a show like that to LA, it wouldn't work here. It's too sunny and green.

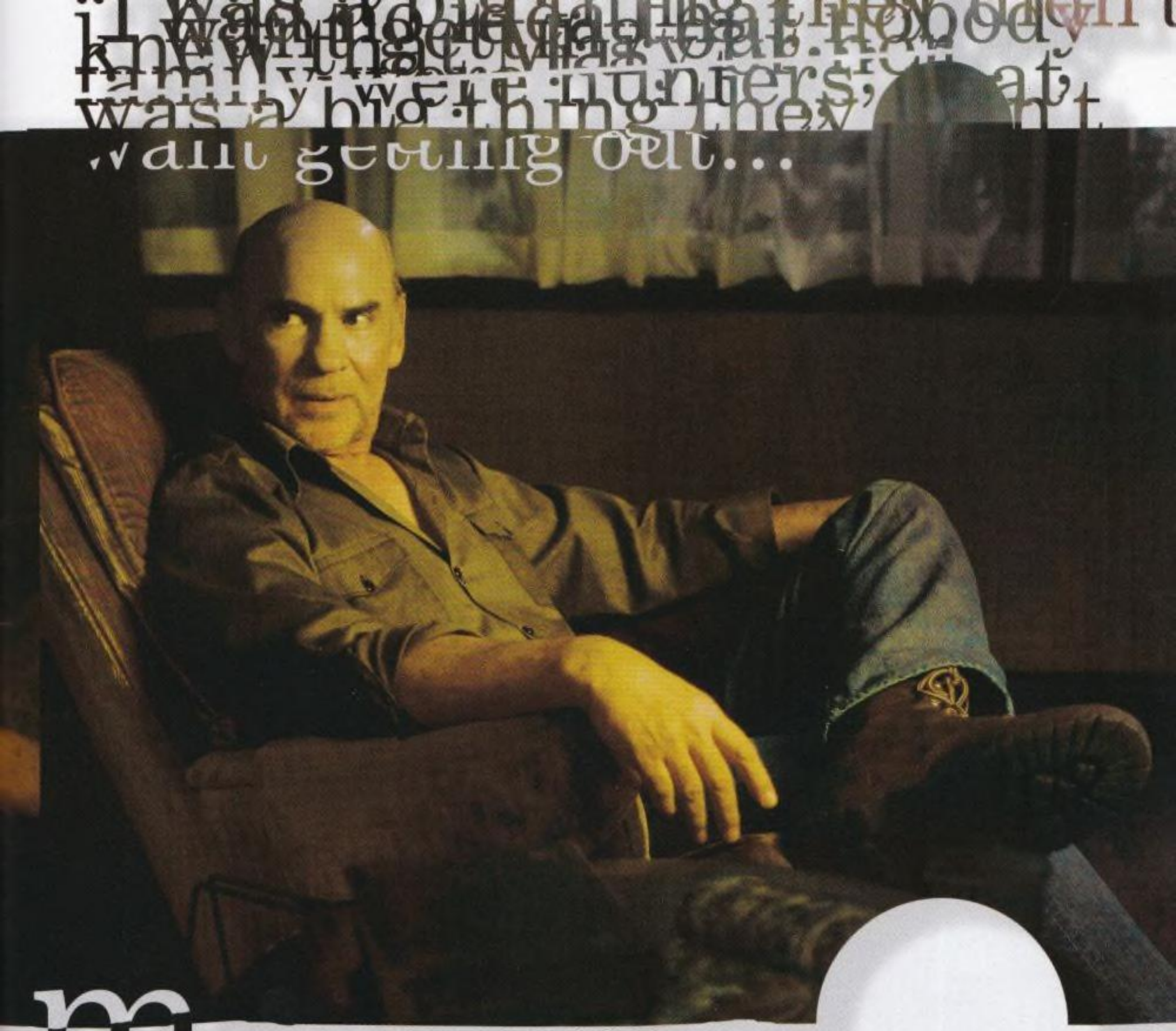
What other projects do you have in the pipeline?

I just finished [filming] a cute comedy called *The Chosen One*. Rob Schneider wrote it and stars in it. It's not one of his over-the-top comedies. It's sweet, and there are some very serious moments in it. I play his ex-wife who has left him for my scuba or yoga instructor. It's cute, but [at the moment] I have my fingers crossed that I get to be in the *Transformers* sequel!

Finally, is it a strange feeling having your own Mary Winchester trading card?

Yeah, but I'll tell you what's really surreal. We approved the picture for the card, it came out, they sent me a whole box of them, and then they came out with another one that had little pieces of the nightgown and robe I was wearing cut up and stuck on the card! It's bizarre. What's also weird is that on Wikipedia, they have no page for me, but Mary Winchester has her own page! It's a little indicator of who is more important in the *Supernatural* world [*laughs*]!

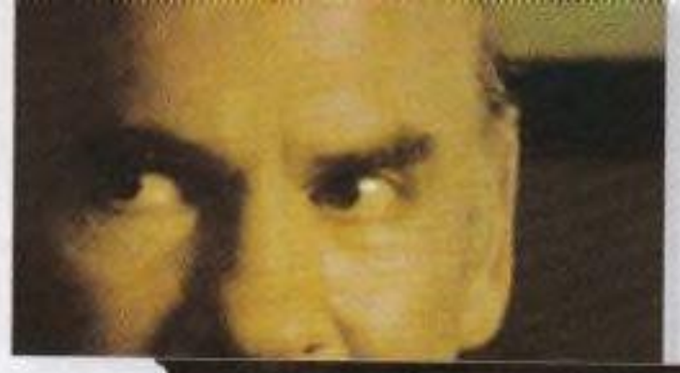
Blast From the



Past

Words: Jayne Nelson

Time-travel, demon deals and deadly possession – guest star Mitch Pileggi certainly chose an action-packed episode of *Supernatural* in which to make his mark as grandpa to the Winchester boys. We ask him about kissing, swearing, and the joy of being ol' Yellow Eyes...



Mitch Pileggi doesn't hesitate for a second when we ask him his favorite moment from the shooting of *In The Beginning*. "Kissing Amy!" he laughs, referring to his character's lip-lock with actress Amy Gumenick, who played his on-screen daughter Mary. His character Samuel was possessed by the Yellow-Eyed Demon – and Samuel was Mary's father, which obviously added a whole new level of 'ick' to the scene.

"Poor girl!" Pileggi remembers. "I was like, 'I'm sorry you gotta kiss your dad – this blows!' She was so cool about it! I was angsting about it more than [Amy] was. She was fine, but I was like, 'Oh no, you gotta kiss an old guy!'"

Pileggi might have guest-starred in only a single episode of *Supernatural*, but he certainly left a massive impression on both the series and the hearts of fans – probably because he was lucky enough to play not one but *two* important characters in the show's myth-arc: Samuel Campbell, grandfather to Sam and Dean, and the demonic Azazel (the Yellow-Eyed Demon).

The actor had to do some preparation for the latter role, having never watched the show before... "You know, I hadn't," he reveals. "My wife had watched *Supernatural* and she loved it and always talked about it, but I never got around to watching it," he reveals. "After I saw it I said to Eric Kripke, 'Why am I not watching this show? It's *good*!'"

Because he'd never seen *Supernatural*, Pileggi also had no inkling as to why *In The Beginning* was shrouded in so much secrecy during filming. "I had no idea that nobody knew that Mary or her family were hunters; that was a big thing they didn't want getting out," he says, with a wry chuckle. "After that I realized how huge it was for the fans!"

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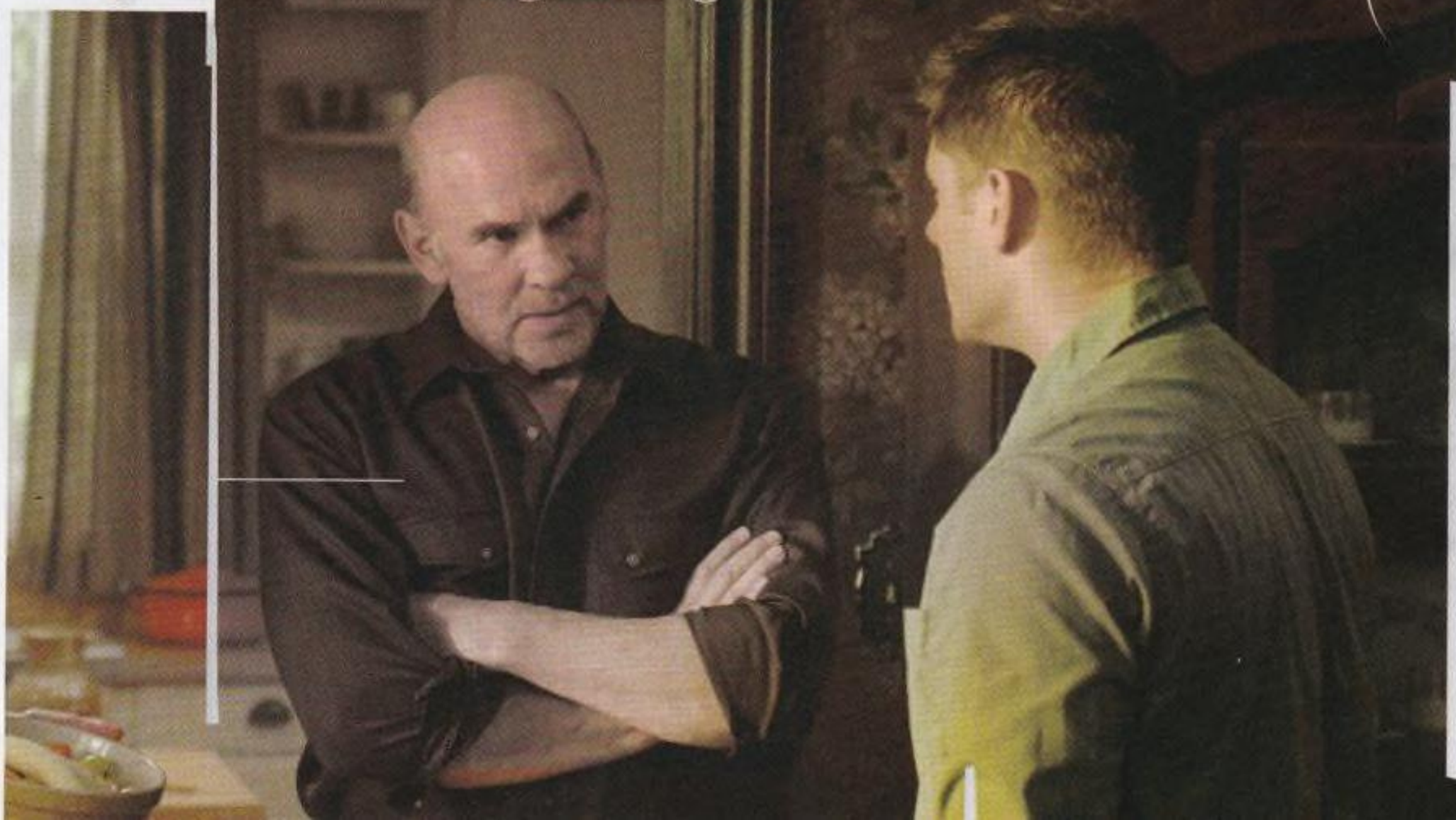
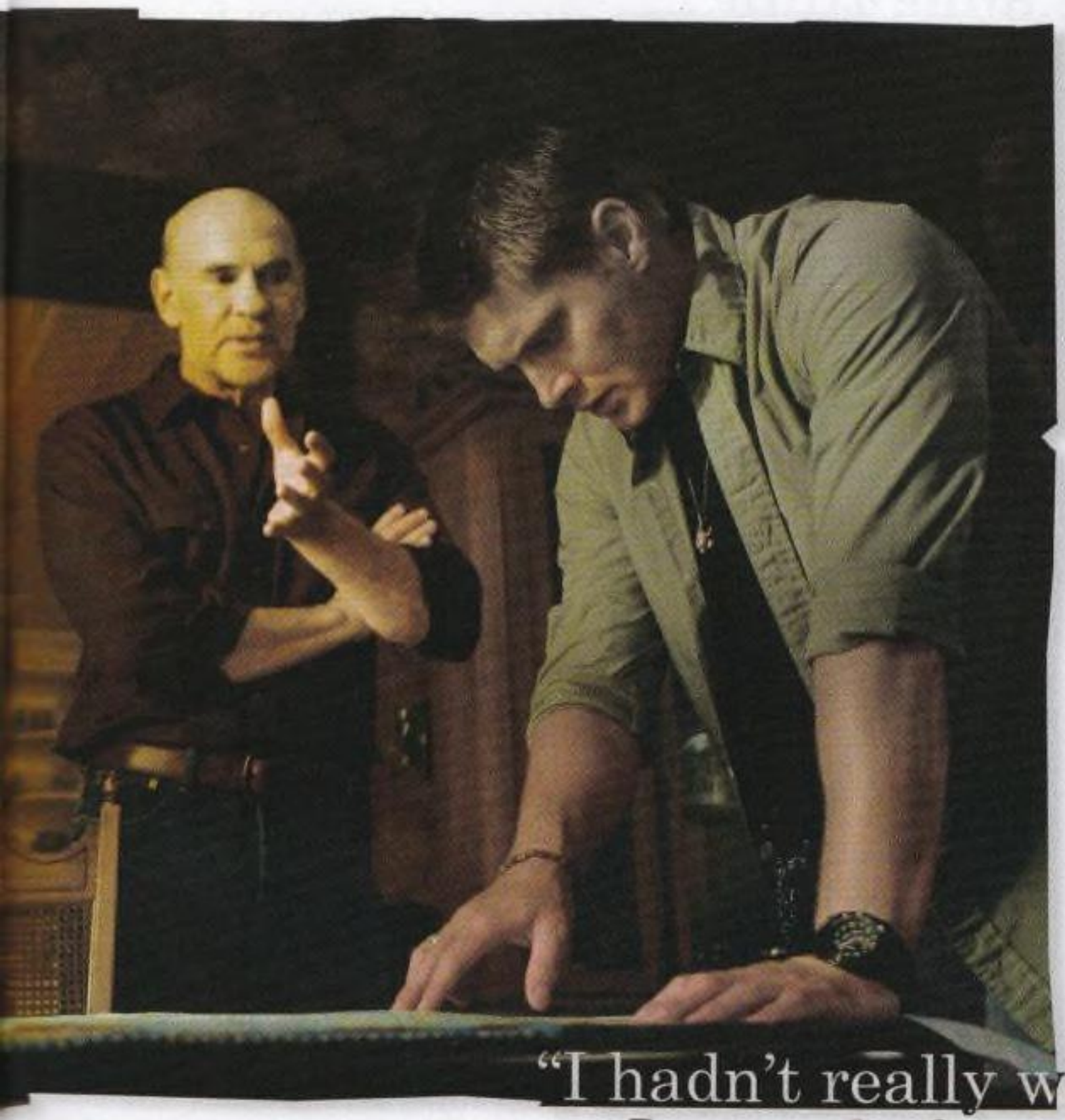




Of course, *In The Beginning* sees Dean whisked back to 1973 to bump into his teenage parents, rather like Marty McFly in the movie *Back To The Future*, except that instead of having to get John Winchester and Mary Campbell to fall in love (they've already got that covered), he has to try to stop something terrible from happening. As ever with *Supernatural*, surprise follows surprise, right up until Pileggi's grumpy but good-hearted Samuel becomes the new host for an old enemy: Azazel.

"Before I went to do it, they gave me a couple of episodes to give me an idea of what Fredric Lehne had done with the character, because they wanted that flavor for the demon," Pileggi tells us, when we ask how he got into character as Azazel. "When they first said that they wanted me to emulate what he was doing, they said he was doing a kind of Jack Nicholson thing. I said, 'Okay, fine, I'm copying an actor who was copying another actor!'" He laughs. "I'm not saying that's what he was doing, but it did have that kind of flavor to it. I kind of did what I thought was right, but I put my own spin on it [as well]."

Did he have to wear contact lenses for the role of Yellow-Eyes?

"They fitted me for them, but they ended up doing the yellow eyes with CGI," says Pileggi, sounding relieved. "They didn't want them to be constantly yellow. Watching other people who'd had them in, it looked like they were having a really hard time seeing – I guess you really can't see that well with them. I was very happy about it when they said they'd put 'em in [digitally] every once in a while, at appropriate moments."

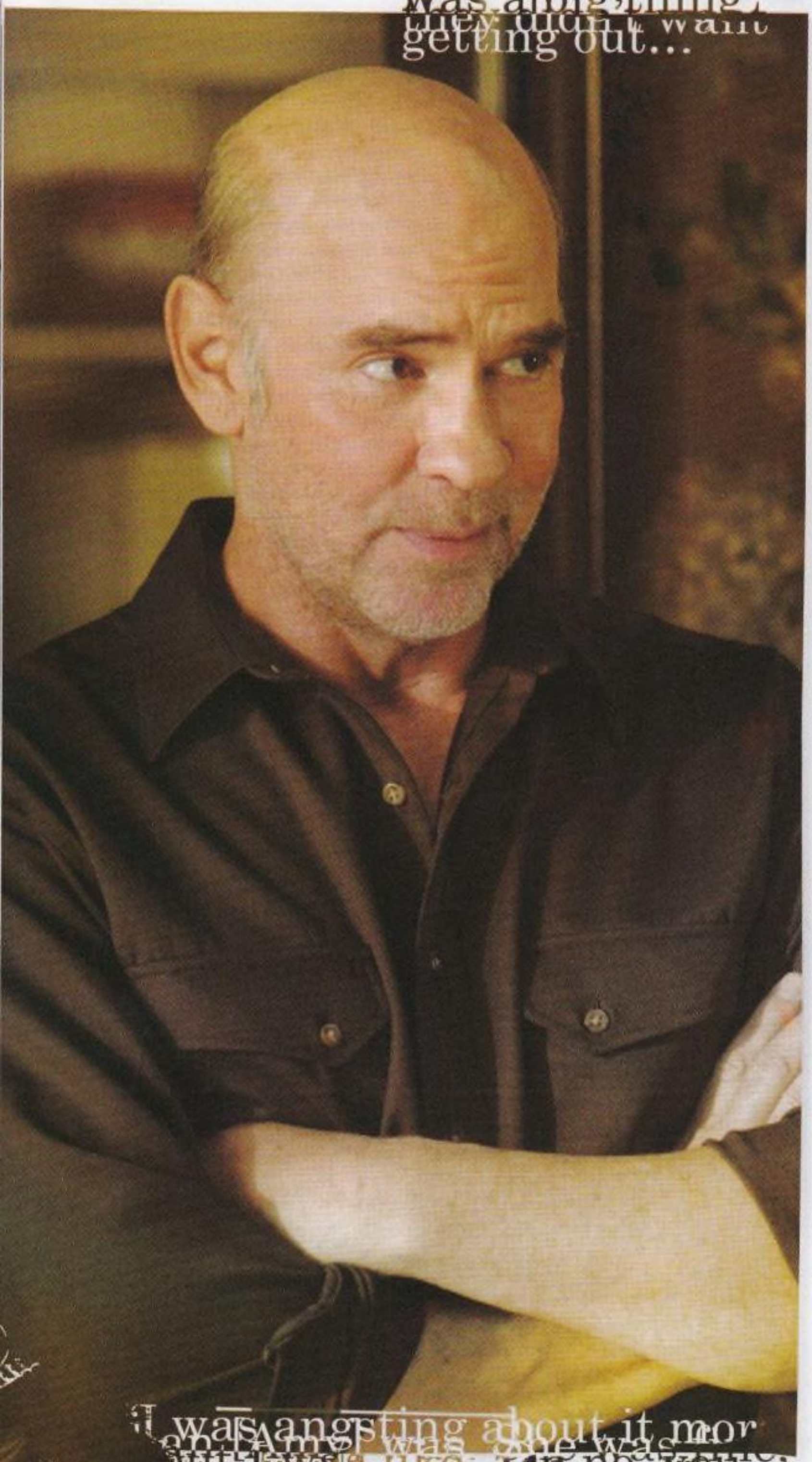
As well as bringing back an old enemy, *In The Beginning* also introduced us to Mary's family, including the woman who Dean was named after, Deanna (played by Allison Hossack). When we mention his fellow Campbells, Pileggi sounds wistful. "Yeah, the woman who played my wife... I felt so bad for her when I had to break her neck. Darn it! 'I wish I didn't have to do this, but...'" He laughs. "And Amy was just as sweet as can be, she was just a doll. I really enjoyed working with her."

After doing so much research to pin down the role of Azazel, playing Samuel must have been a lot easier. Pileggi agrees. "When I do a role I just kind of immerse myself in the script and what's going on, where he's at, what's he doing, the atmosphere, who he's talking to, and kind of let that take over. I just let it evolve and happen. I hadn't really watched Jared or Jensen before, but I guess I picked up on some of their beats, some of their characteristics in the way they play their characters."

> "I hadn't really watched Jared or Jensen before, but I guess I picked up on some of their beats, some of their characteristics in the way they play their characters."

That might explain why, at one point in the episode, Samuel says "sonofabitch" and it sounds very similar to the way a certain Dean Winchester delivers the word... Pileggi grins. "You know, he said it to me earlier during filming when I was the Yellow-Eyed Demon – 'You sonofabitch, I'm the one who killed you!' – and when I used it, it wasn't scripted. I said to the director, Steve Boyum, 'When you get to my face, can I say sonofabitch?' And afterward I picked up on it – hey, this is what the guys say all the time! I guess it runs in the family!"

"I had no idea that nobody knew that Mary or her family were hunters, that was a big thing they didn't want getting out..."



HORROR STAPLE

As many reading this will probably know, Mitch Pileggi is no stranger to the world of horror and science fiction. "I think I can attribute that to walking into a room one day and meeting Wes Craven on a movie that I did," the actor muses (the film was 1989's *Shocker*, in which he played a serial killer back from the dead). "That pretty much set me up in the horror, sci-fi and fantasy genre for a long time."

Since then he's appeared on a multitude of shows, most recently popping up in a recurring role on *Stargate: Atlantis*. But there's one on his résumé that has a link with *Supernatural* – 2003's *Tarzan*, which was where he met Eric Kripke, who was writing and producing the series. "Eric was an *X-Files* fan before we even met, so he was aware of me. I think that may have had a lot to do with me getting called in and meeting him in the first place. Of course, David Nutter [the director of *Supernatural*'s first two episodes] was also the director of the pilot for *Tarzan*."

Which brings us to the one role everybody associates with Pileggi: Assistant Director Walter S. Skinner in *The X-Files*, which, just like *Supernatural*, was also filmed in Vancouver (for the first half of its run, at least). Given that several other *X-Files* alumni have moved onto *Supernatural*, was it a little bit of a reunion when he made the episode?

"There were quite a few people from the old *X-Files* crew working on the show," Pileggi agrees. "I work up in Vancouver so much that I have the good fortune to run into a lot of people I worked with on *The X-Files*, which is very cool! It was my family for five years, so when I get the chance to work with them again it's always great."

Pileggi also had a cameo role in the recent *X-Files* movie, *I Want To Believe*. Was it weird being Skinner again after so many years? He chuckles. "You know, I didn't have much to do, so it wasn't that hard! Basically kicking doors in and yelling at people – I was doing that for nine years, so I can pretty much do it in my sleep!"

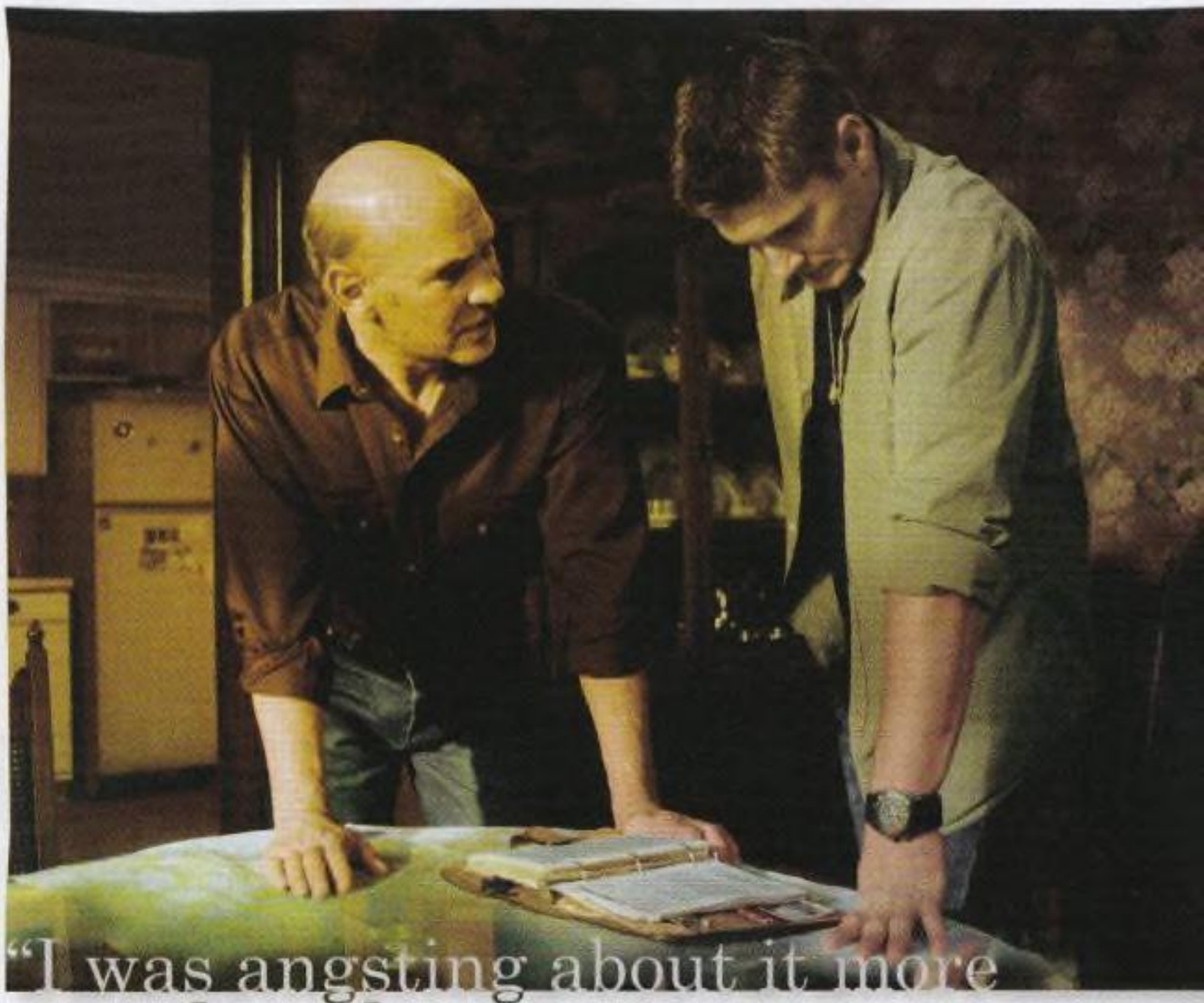
GOOD TO BE BAD

Thanks to the demands of the script, Pileggi spent most of his *Supernatural* episode working with Jensen Ackles, as Sam didn't really feature in the story. "Jared wasn't there – he had most of the episode off as his character kind of bookended the show," Pileggi recalls. "However, I think he took a quick trip to Hawaii and they made Jensen suffer through that. From what I understand, the crew would put postcards from Hawaii on the camera when Jensen was doing a scene."

Wow, that's just… evil. "It is! It's mean! He was like," he sighs, pretending to be a miserable Jensen, "'Okay, alright…' But I met Jared, and he's one of the sweetest guys, and working with Jensen was just a dream. The guy's a pro. He's good, no attitude, he's there to work and still has a good time, too. I was really happy to be there."

Has he had any feedback from fans about his work on the show? "As a matter of fact, I was at the gym yesterday and a guy came up to me and said that he was a really big *Supernatural* fan and that he saw the episode and loved it. Eric called me and told me that some of the publicists from Warner Bros. had called to say that the fans were very happy with what we did, and I was very happy about that!

"Playing the Yellow-Eyed Demon was a hoot," he continues, adding that sometimes it's *good* to play *bad*. "It really is; there's so much more there. I've just finished doing an episode of *Criminal Minds*, in which I'm playing a guy whose five-year-old daughter gets crushed in front of him by a car and he just goes haywire. You're able to work



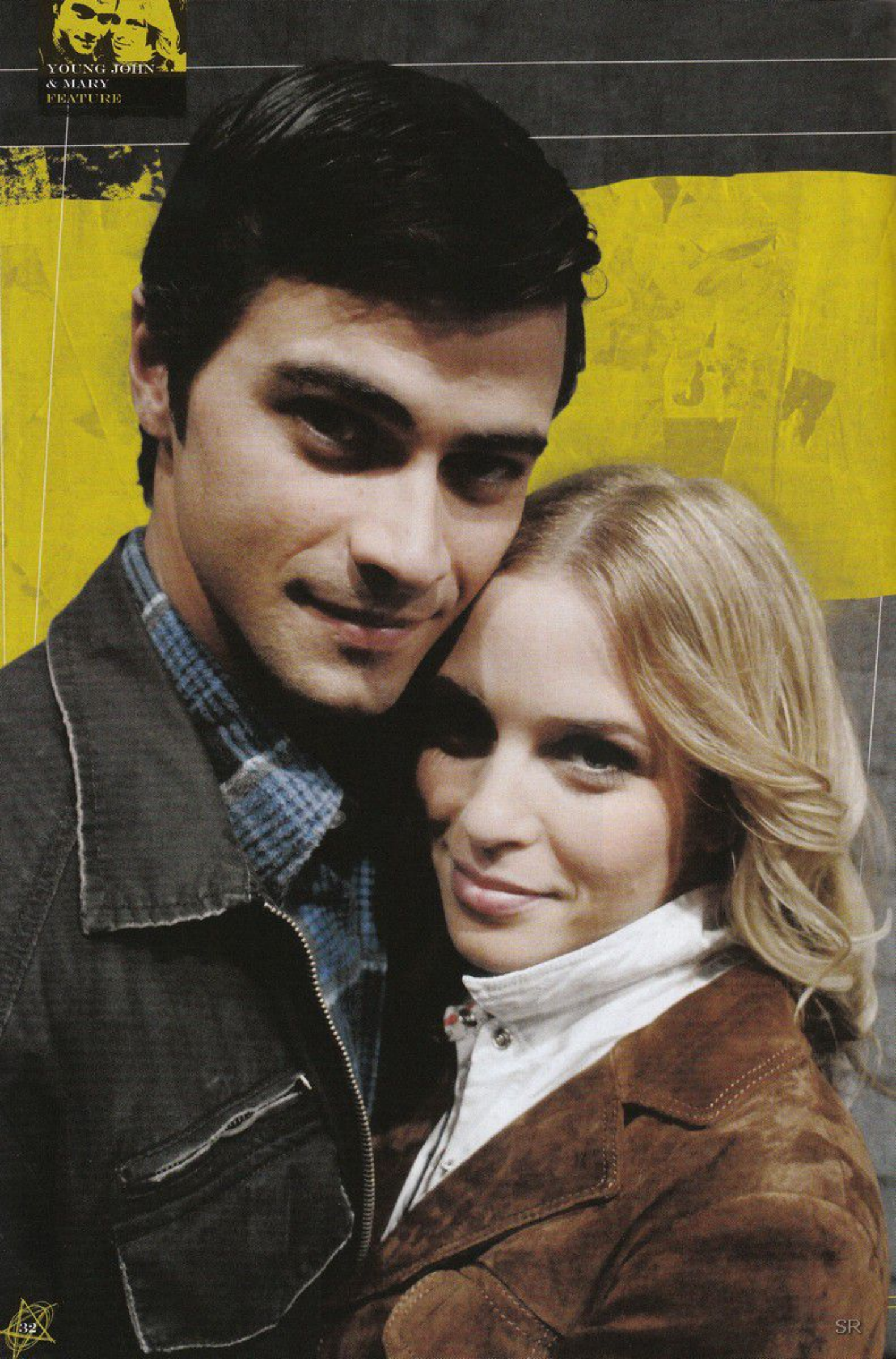
"I was angsting about it more than [Amy] was. She was fine, but I was like, 'Oh no, you gotta kiss an old guy!'"

so much crap out of your system! When I came home I was a much nicer person! It's almost like therapy, but it was so exhausting that I'm [still] getting my breath and recovering from that. It was pretty brutal. I worked with [*In The Beginning* director] Steve Boyum again on that."

Did Boyum request him? "Yeah, and that's the quickest it's ever happened," Pileggi says. "When we finished shooting *Supernatural* Steve said, 'Would you be in my stable of actors that I use?' and I said, 'Oh, yeah!' He called me up right away with probably one of the greatest roles I've ever had."

So, we have one final question. Now that we know what Samuel Campbell was doing in 1973 (saving people, hunting things, meeting a sticky end), what was Pileggi himself doing? He thinks about it for a few moments. "I would have been 21. I was just finishing school in Munich at an American university there, and from there I went to Saudi Arabia, so I was working out there for a while. I didn't really start acting until I came back; I was in the Middle-East for a long time. I was in Iran in 1978, and I left there right before the Shah left and the revolution started. I came back to the States and that's when I went back down to Texas and started acting."

Pileggi's real life couldn't be more different from the hunter he ended up portraying in Lawrence, Kansas in the same period. "I had a great time doing it, and hopefully, if they could figure it out, I could do it again," Pileggi says of the role, although he isn't sure exactly *how* they could bring him back. "Unless they need me as what they call the 'meat-suit'! I don't know what kind of shape I'd be in, but I'd go back in a second."



SR

Young LOVE

Words: Tara Bennett

Death is never the end on *Supernatural*. In season four's In *The Beginning*, courtesy of Castiel, Dean got to meet his late parents' younger selves, and found out a few shocking secrets along the way. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* meets the younger Mary and John Winchester, aka AMY GUMENICK and MATT COHEN...

In a fourth season brimming with amazing revelations and stunning episodes, it's almost hard to pick favorites. But if pressed, a *Supernatural* standout that became an instant classic was definitely the time-traveling mindbender, *In The Beginning*. When Castiel zaps Dean back to 1973, he finally gets some all-important answers about some major Winchester family secrets when he meets his young hunter mother, Mary, and dashing dad, John, prior to their marriage… and before he was even a glimmer in their eyes.

It was heart-wrenching stuff, due in large part to the moving performances of the actors stepping into the roles of the young Mary and John – Amy Gumenick and Matt Cohen. Both relative newbies to Hollywood (in fact, *Supernatural* was Amy's first professional acting job) they chatted with *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about their delight and initial concerns about playing such iconic roles in the show's mythology.

Called in to read during standard auditions for their respective parts, both actors admit they were clued in early to the importance of who they might be playing. "I was pretty excited for a couple of reasons," Cohen enthuses. "One, it was a period piece and I got to play in the 70s. Two, I got to play a younger Jeffrey Dean Morgan [who of course played the adult John], which is an honor all in itself. I came in for the role and, luckily, I had a classic enough look to *be* a young Jeffrey." Gumenick adds, "I was sent actress Samantha Smith's [the adult Mary] information and looked through that, so that research got me through the basic storyline. I knew that it was a revealing episode, but I didn't quite understand *how* important and how much was left unsaid. Entering a world and a character that's already loved by the fans was not an expectation that you usually have going into a part. I had to look like this woman; I had to embody her characteristics."

The pair admits that the idea of not meeting the fans' expectations in playing the well-established characters' younger selves made them both very nervous initially. "It's more daunting to go into anything and play somebody else," Cohen says frankly. "You're not creating your own character, so you don't have that freedom to make whatever choices you want. I researched John as much as possible. I was familiar with him from the beginning, but I wanted to see how he really looked on the show. I hadn't seen any of his episodes, so I went back and watched about 10 or 15 episodes to see the relationship between Jared and Jensen and Jeffrey. He had a quiet, loving-yet-stern demeanor, and I tried to bring that to the table."

Gumenick says she had the same approach as well. "I watched clips of past episodes with Samantha for characteristics and

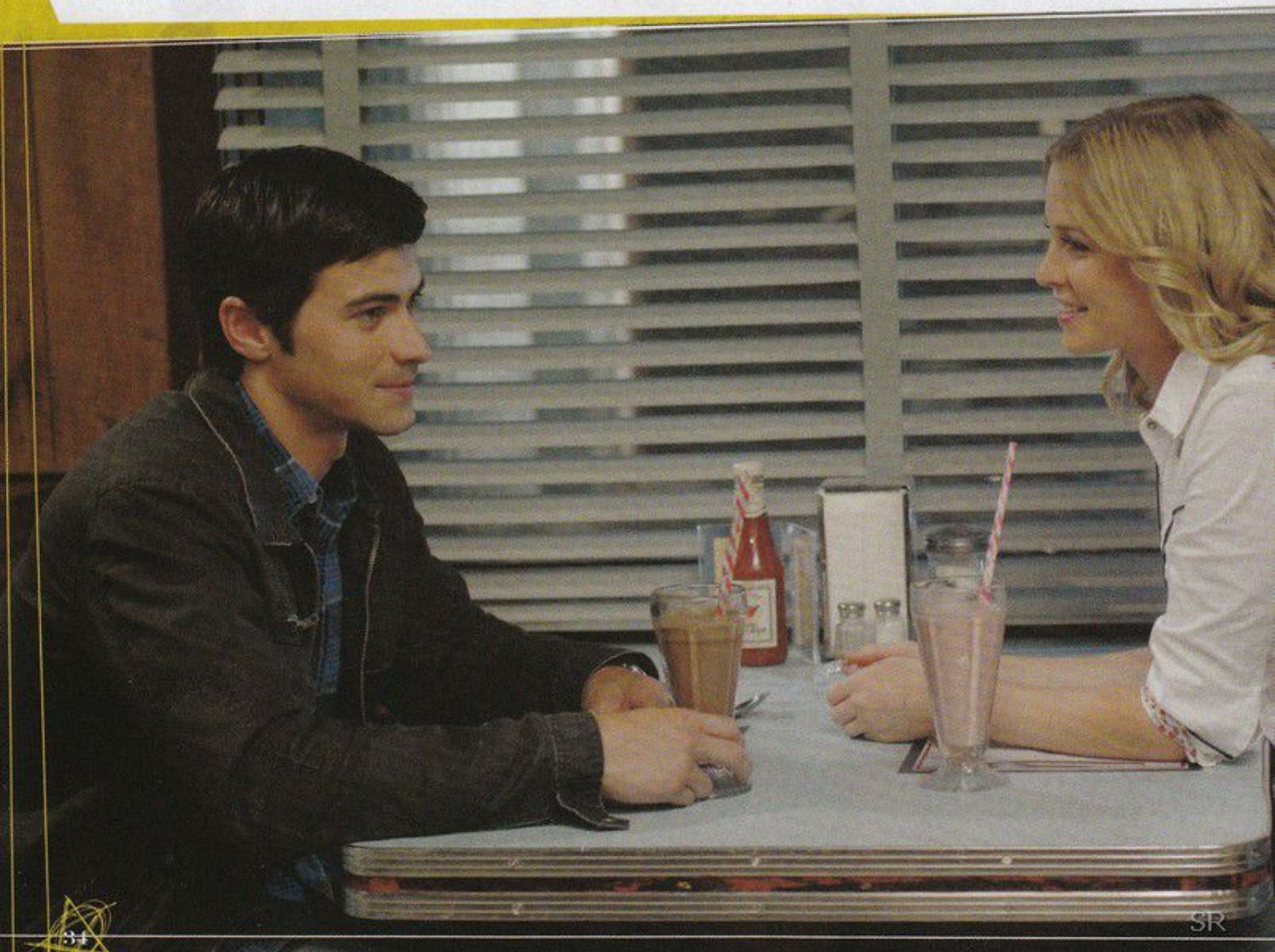
mannerisms I could embody, but one of my concerns was whether I was playing the younger version of the character she established, or if I was making it my own different character, but still respecting the choices she had made. Director Steve Boyum said because so much has happened that you *don't* know about Mary, he really wanted to establish that she's a completely different Mary. He said right off the bat to not worry about playing Samantha's Mary, to make it my own, and that I was cast because I naturally had some of her characteristics."

Cohen says he also got some great advice from Ackles once he arrived on the set. "I talked with Jensen a lot. He was great to work with, because he gave me every bit of information that could help me. It made it easier because [I was] scared to play a character that Jeffrey had played, because you want to do well and not embarrass him. Jensen told me that Jeffrey had a lot of love in his eyes. He was quiet and stern, but he was very, very human. You watch [Jeffrey] and you can't help but fall in love with his character. It helped me because when you think of the human nature of people, that's what you need to bring to a character more than anything. So many actors forget that they're human after all; you're not just playing a character. Trying to get the human, full-hearted side of him kept me grounded and kept it real."

> "I got to play a younger Jeffrey Dean Morgan, which is an honor all in itself." – Matt

Another help was the rapport the actors felt working with one another. "Matt and I had never met before," Gumenick explains. "But we had a really good time. To build the chemistry and to get to that place wasn't hard. It just came to us." Cohen agrees and adds, "Amy's a super talent. She's going to be huge."

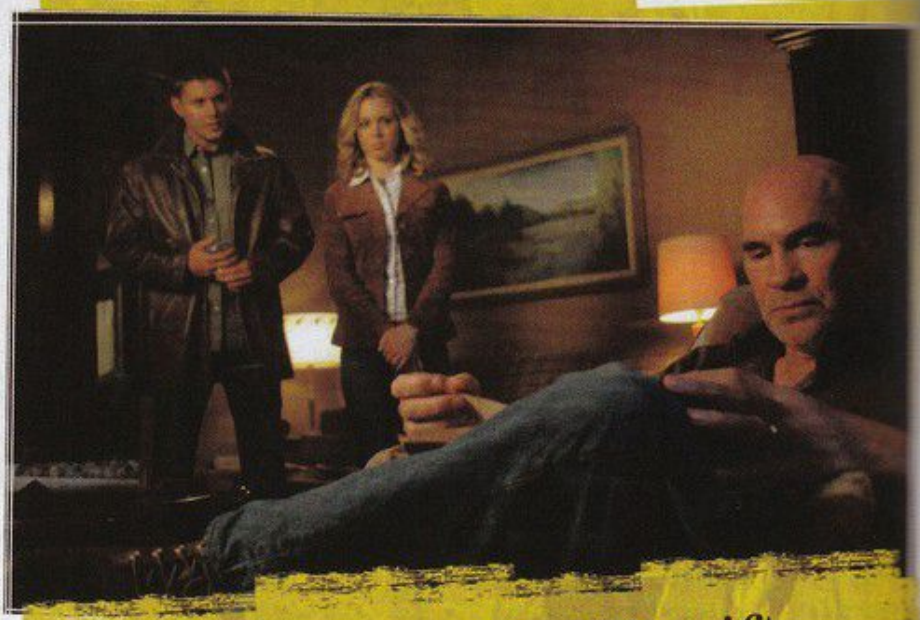
Once the duo arrived at the Vancouver set to shoot the episode, the rest of their concerns melted away as they were welcomed warmly to the fold. "Walking on set with all these actors that I know and respect and just being



thrown into it and told to 'go' was initially intimidating," Gumenick laughs, "but the whole cast and crew was so welcoming and took me into their world and their family." Cohen agrees, adding, "The crew and everyone were so lighthearted, and there were no egos. There were no bad vibes. They have something special up there, and I was lucky to be part of it."

Much of the episode revolves around the Campbell family legacy of being hunters, and Mary's absolute desire to leave behind that life to be "normal" with John. That storyline gave Gumenick the opportunity to shed some light on her character's formerly unknown and complicated history. "I'm very close with my family," the actress explains. "I think for some people there's a battle of what you want to do and the kind of life you picture [versus] the expectations of your family. When you're close to your family, especially with Mary's parents involved in such a crazy world as demon hunting, that's something people think about all the time. I'm lucky [because] I have a supportive family, but I see all the time the struggle between people finding their own identities and breaking out of the restrictions and expectations that their family and society have placed on them. On a greater level, there is a lot of that for Mary. She feels like she doesn't really have a choice. In a way, that makes her a tragic character –she's born with this gift, and into this 'profession,' and doesn't know how to get out. She craves something different."

Those issues reveal an unexpected layer of desperation in Mary, which Gumenick says provided an interesting subtext to her romance [with John]. "We talked about that, and it was very clear, even from the sides [the sample script pages used for casting] in the audition, that John offers her a ticket out," the actress explains. "I think she does love him and wants to have a life with him, but it's more than that. She craves freedom. There's an innocence that John embodies that she wishes she had, and she sees that he could give her the life that she [always] wanted."



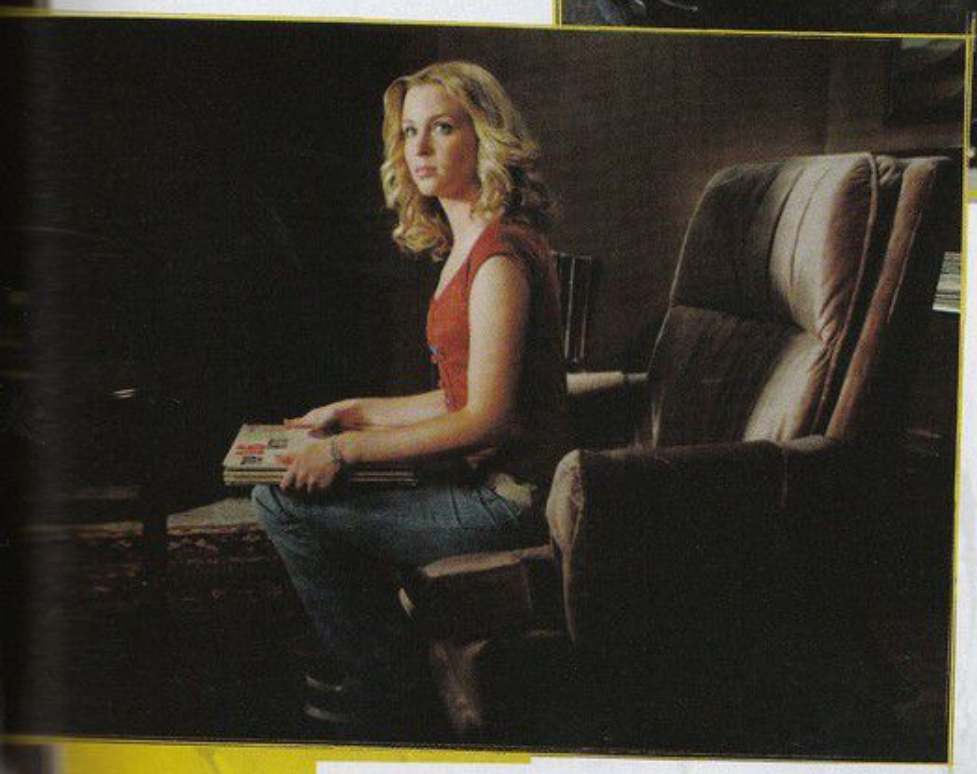
On the flip side, Mary is also leading an unwitting John into a world that will eventually cause pain to him and every member of their family. "You assume when you are in a relationship, and talking about marriage, that you really know the person, but there's so much he doesn't know," the actress considers. "He has to really know Mary, but yet there's a whole life he has no idea about. When you play a character you have to be sympathetic toward them, but stepping out of it, I feel horrible for John. He's thrown into this life against his will. But it shows that they surely had to be in love, or he would have just run."

The pain of a hunter's life is no better illustrated than when the Yellow-Eyed Demon murders Mary's mother, Deanna, and father, Samuel, in cold blood. Renowned actor Mitch Pileggi got to play double-duty, first as Mary's dad, and then as the Yellow-Eyed Demon possessing Samuel's body. For Cohen

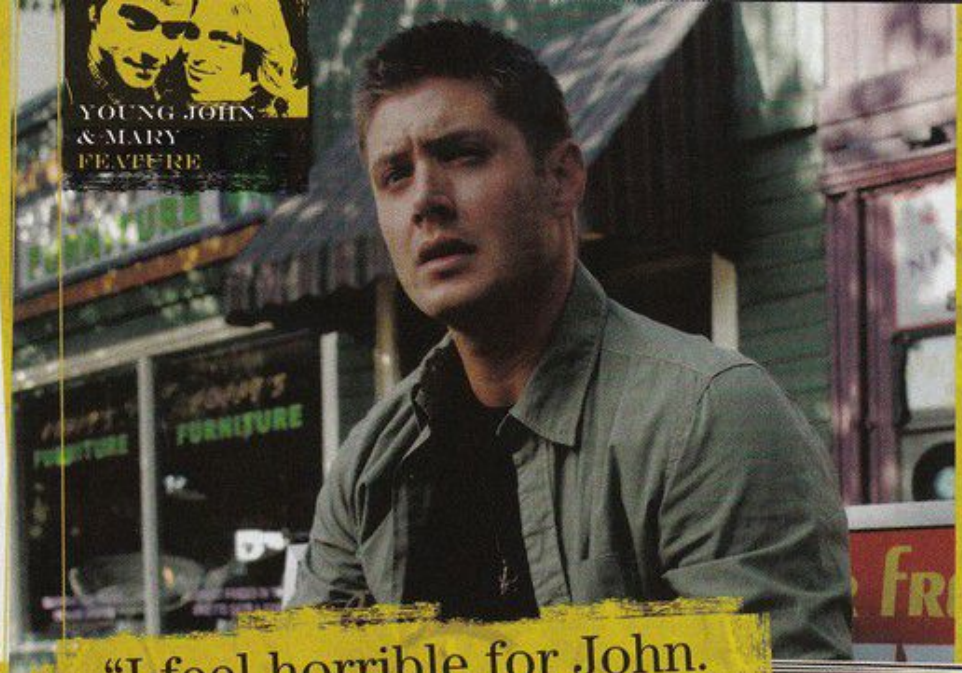
"Mary's born with this gift, and into this 'profession,' and doesn't know how to get out. She craves something different." – Amy

and Gumenick, it was their rare chance to work with a legend. "I was absolutely a sponge when it came to anything Mitch had to say," Cohen chuckles. "I was constantly eavesdropping on his conversations with the director. He's been doing this for so long, and he's always been so good, so anything I could steal from him [I did]! He was very nice to me. We're actually represented by the same people, so I see him in L.A. pretty much on a weekly basis at the gym. He's a good guy and was creatively open with me on the set. Our characters had next to no interaction, but when we did, we tried to make it worth it and have fun with it."

Gumenick agrees wholeheartedly. "Working with Mitch was amazing. He's probably one of the warmest, most welcoming people I have ever met. From the second we were on set together it [clicked]. I felt like he could be my dad. Toward the end of the process, we became a lot closer. There was an unspoken protective father/ daughter feeling. It was ironic that on my first big job I had this angel on set to take care of me. In my final scene, where I find out that the Yellow-Eyed Demon has taken over my father's body and killed my family, going into that I was really nervous, because I had no idea where it was going to go. But working with an actor like Mitch, who's so there and so available, made it easy for me to let go, and that was really powerful."

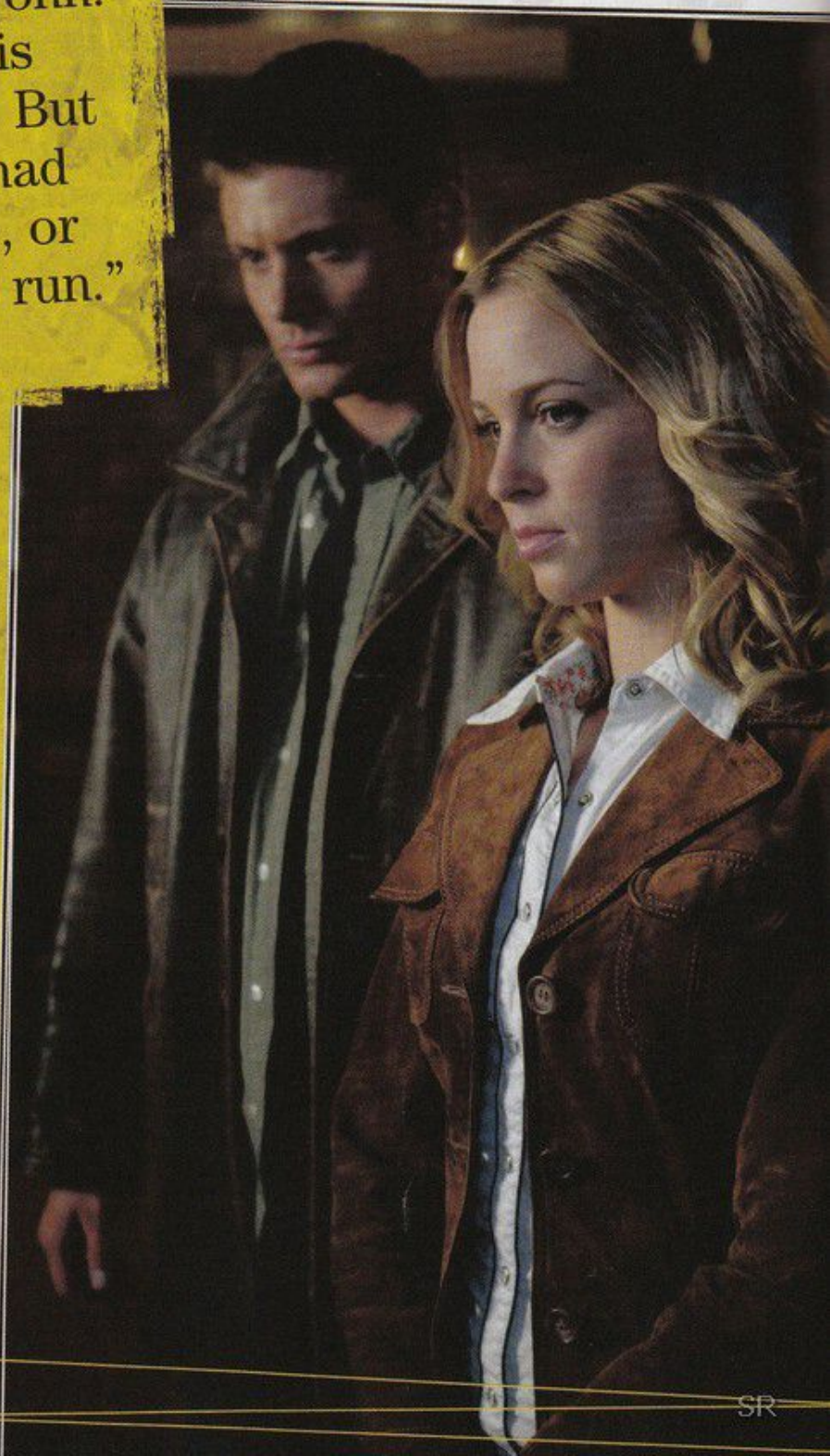


Another special scene for Gumenick was the one where Dean blesses Mary's relationship with John. "It's hard to say what my favorite scene was, but it's probably the one where I tell Dean that I want to get out [of hunting] and he comes to say goodbye. It went to a place I wasn't expecting. Reading it, I think it's a very emotional scene, and reveals a lot about both characters. I think it's the point where Mary sees something different about this guy and can't



not sure how they're going to make you look and if your acting is going to come off as relevant to the time period. I love the scene at the end where I jump out of the car and run up to Mitch's character, who snaps my neck. That's another thing that you worry about – faking a death scene!" he laughs. "You always feel pretty dumb doing it, but I had a lot of trust in Mitch and the director. It came out really well, and I'm proud of it. I was really happy overall with the whole episode!"

"I feel horrible for John. He's thrown into this life against his will. But it shows that they had to surely be in love, or he would have just run." – Amy



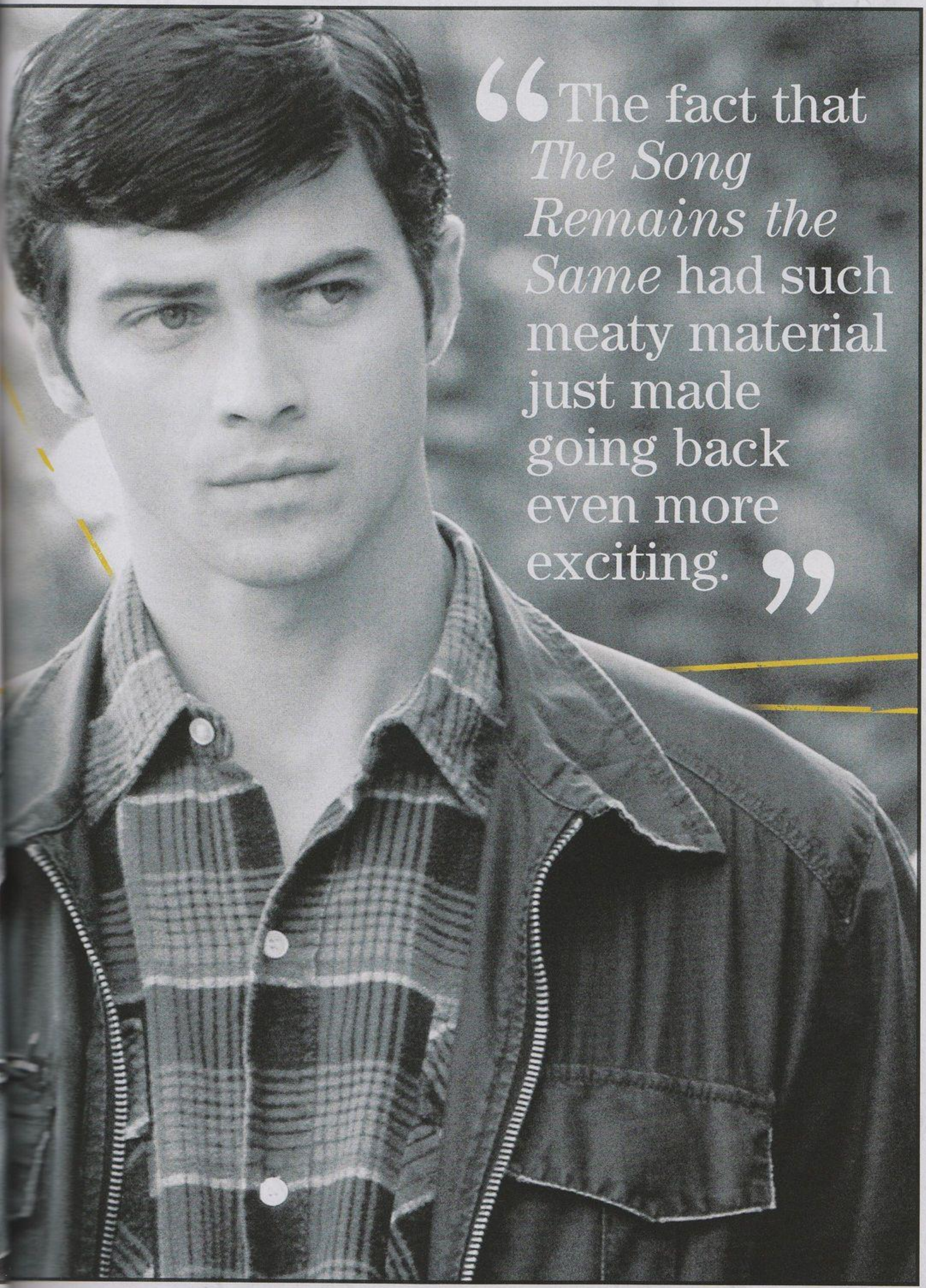
pinpoint it. It's almost like she's falling in love with him but not, because it's not *that* kind of love. It's interesting to play a love scene with your son – it's a mother's love. We had a few takes where we both had to stop because we were tearing up. It's a confusing scene for Mary. She's feeling all these things and doesn't know who this guy is, because he's turned her world upside down. She wants so badly to get out and then this mysterious person shows up and he's this all-knowing being that comes into her life."

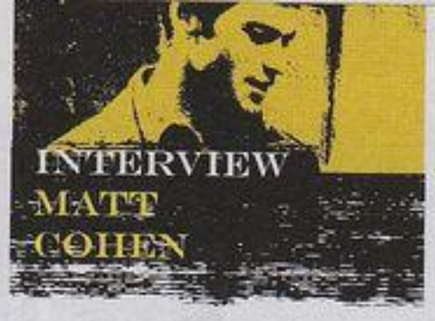
When the episode premiered last fall, fans completely embraced the new chapter in the Winchester story, as well as the actors who brought Mary and John to life. Gumenick and Cohen were relieved to get their own blessing from the audience and hope that more opportunities come up to tell more of John and Mary's early stories. "I think there's still a lot to be discovered about them," Gumenick says. Cohen concurs and adds, "You never know what to expect when you get into a piece where you're playing a different time. You're

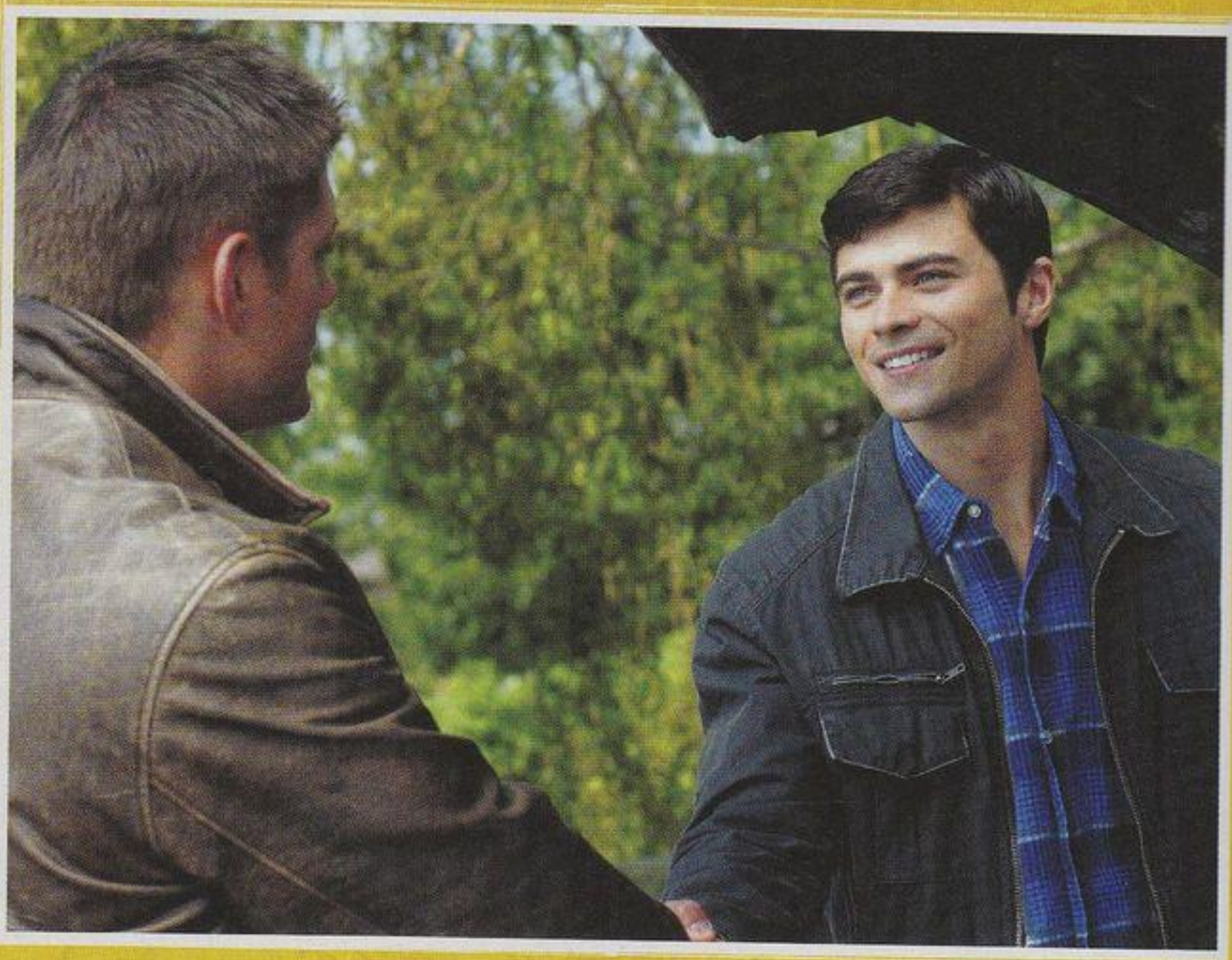
DRAWING THE SWORD

Words: Nicholas Knight

PREVIOUSLY UNAWARE OF THE SUPERNATURAL, YOUNG JOHN WINCHESTER WAS THROWN INTO THE THICK OF THINGS IN *THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME* WHEN HE WAS MADE THE TEMPORARY SWORD OF MICHAEL. *THE OFFICIAL SUPERNATURAL MAGAZINE* SPOKE TO ACTOR MATT COHEN ABOUT HIS RETURN TO THE SHOW, FIGHT SCENES, AND BEING STARSTRUCK BY FANS!


"The fact that *The Song Remains the Same* had such meaty material just made going back even more exciting."





When we last spoke with Matt Cohen, his *Supernatural* character, Young John Winchester, had been murdered by a demon and then resurrected... and now he finds himself being murdered by an angel and resurrected yet again. Not surprisingly, Cohen is really excited about the crucial part he plays in filling in the history of the *Supernatural* universe.

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: When you shot *In the Beginning*, did you have any idea that you'd be coming back for another episode?**

Matt Cohen: I had no idea. Amy Gumenick, who plays Mary Campbell, and I both hoped that we would be returning, but we didn't know. So when I got the phone call asking me back, I committed to doing the show regardless of the script – I didn't care if I was going to be a featured extra in the background with no dialogue. I'd had such a great time with the entire cast and crew; they have one of the most perfect programs running there that I've ever been a part of. I preach that all the time. When you have a production that is just the highest quality you can get, then it makes everything easy and you're going to come out with a great show. They have the real deal in Vancouver. The fact that *The Song Remains the Same* had such meaty material just made going back even more exciting.

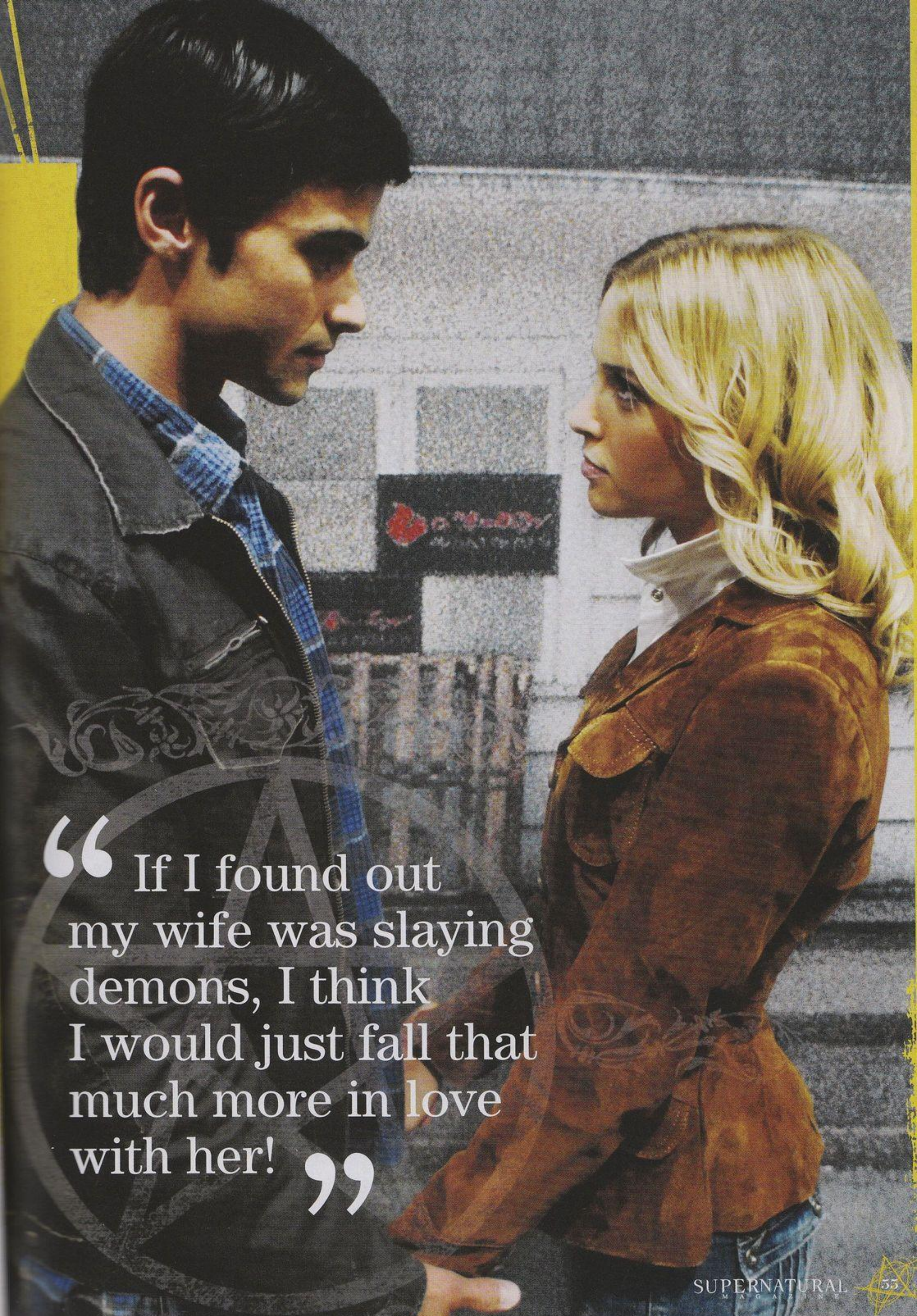
Your meatiest material came when you were playing the archangel Michael. How did you approach portraying this pivotal character?

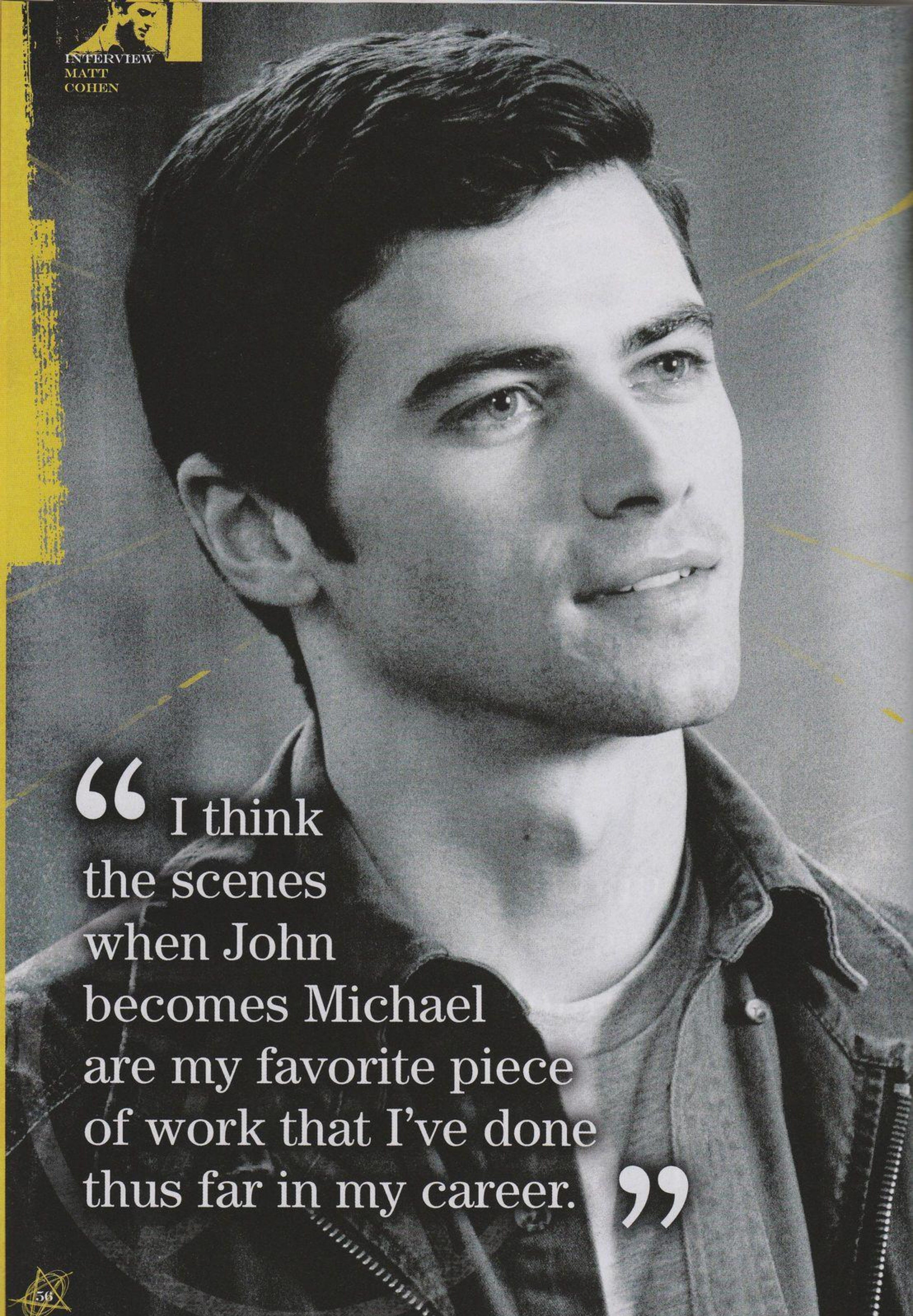
I approached the role very tentatively. I had so many ideas going into playing God's right-hand man. I talked to Jensen Ackles a lot about that, because Jared Padalecki had played Lucifer in an earlier episode, and I hadn't seen that episode. I kind of wanted to be hand-in-hand with that. I wanted Lucifer and Michael to have similarities, because in that regard I didn't want to reach outside the *Supernatural* box. I wanted to keep Michael's humanity. Even though he's this perfect being and all these [incredible] things, he's humane, and I felt that was important. Jensen helped me out a lot, just with some ideas that Jared had brought to the table, because Jared wasn't with me on set the day I was playing Michael. I feel fortunate that Jensen took the time and worked with me. That's one of the reasons why *Supernatural* is so successful – guys like Jensen and Jared give every second to every part of that show. That's what's most important.

John was thrown around pretty good in *The Song Remains the Same*. Did you get to do any of the stunt work yourself?

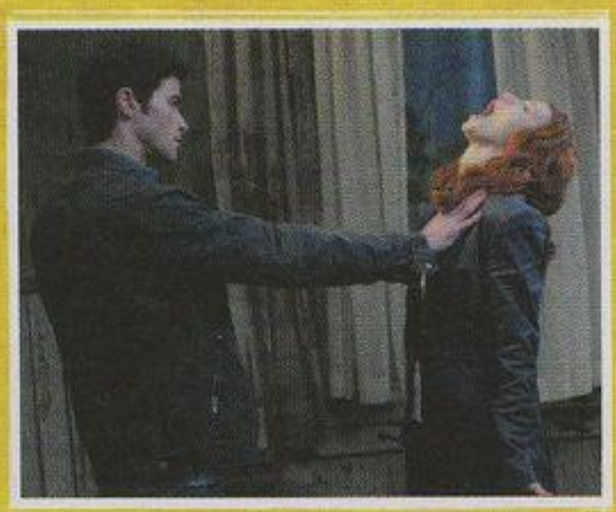
You know what? I begged the director, Steve Boyum. I begged Steve to absolutely kick my ass with stunts, but, seeing as how I was playing in a large part of this episode, as both John and Michael, he kept me pretty safe. He let me do a couple of spills, but I gotta give it up to my stuntman, because my stuntman got tossed around like an absolute rag doll! The whole stunt team that works with *Supernatural* is amazing. They give it their all.

Amy and Julie McNiven worked some great fight sequences in that episode, but John didn't have a whole lot of fight


“If I found out my wife was slaying demons, I think I would just fall that much more in love with her!”



“I think the scenes when John becomes Michael are my favorite piece of work that I’ve done thus far in my career.”



sequences. He pretty much just got his butt kicked the whole time. They're very protective of the actors [by using] knee-pads and elbow-pads and back support and whatnot, but I played football for six years and I currently box, so I'm not one of those actors who sit around trying to be pretty all the time. I enjoy my life. I enjoy being active and boxing and doing whatever I can. I'm not too nervous, so when it comes to taking a spill, you take a spill and get a bruise, big deal; at least your fans know it's *you* taking that spill.

Did you get to go out and do anything active while you were in Vancouver?
I didn't get a chance to do much. I walked around the city; saw as much as I could of downtown. I know the streets and the city pretty well now. I ran around Stanley Park too – I bit off a little more than I could chew with that one. Halfway through, I thought, "Man, it's beautiful, but how long is this freakin' run?" I found out later that it was about eight miles, and I couldn't walk the next day. But, hey, I got to do of the most beautiful, scenic jogging I've ever done in my whole life!

Since you were too sore to walk the next day, it's a good thing you had the Impala to drive!
Yeah, I love the Impala. I love cars. It's funny, because my father has his very first car, a 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air that he's held onto his whole life. But it sat and rusted and now, just over the last four to five years, we've finally restored it. We made it more of an American hotrod – we jumped up the tires in back, put a big 560 horsepower motor in it with no nitrous [oxide] or anything, just raw American horsepower. Right before I did *The Song Remains the Same*, I bought an early 80s Honda motorcycle and turned it into a café racer. Literally just for fun. I didn't want to ride it, I was just bored, and I sold it two weeks later. My dad was a mechanic in his younger years and so I grew up building everything, you name it. I raced Motocross for five years. I raced competitive racing go-carts in Miami, and I won a championship there. Anything with a motor, a steering wheel, or handlebars, I've pretty much done my whole life. So it was definitely great to sit behind the wheel of the Impala. And to be that character – I really felt a lot like my dad. The funny thing is, if I were to show you a picture of my father and Jeffrey Dean Morgan, they could be cousins or brothers; it's not far off.

In *The Song Remains the Same*, John found out that his wife was a monster hunter. How would you react in real life if you found out that your significant other was secretly slaying demons?
I have to say, if I found out my wife was slaying demons, I think I would just fall that much more in love with her!

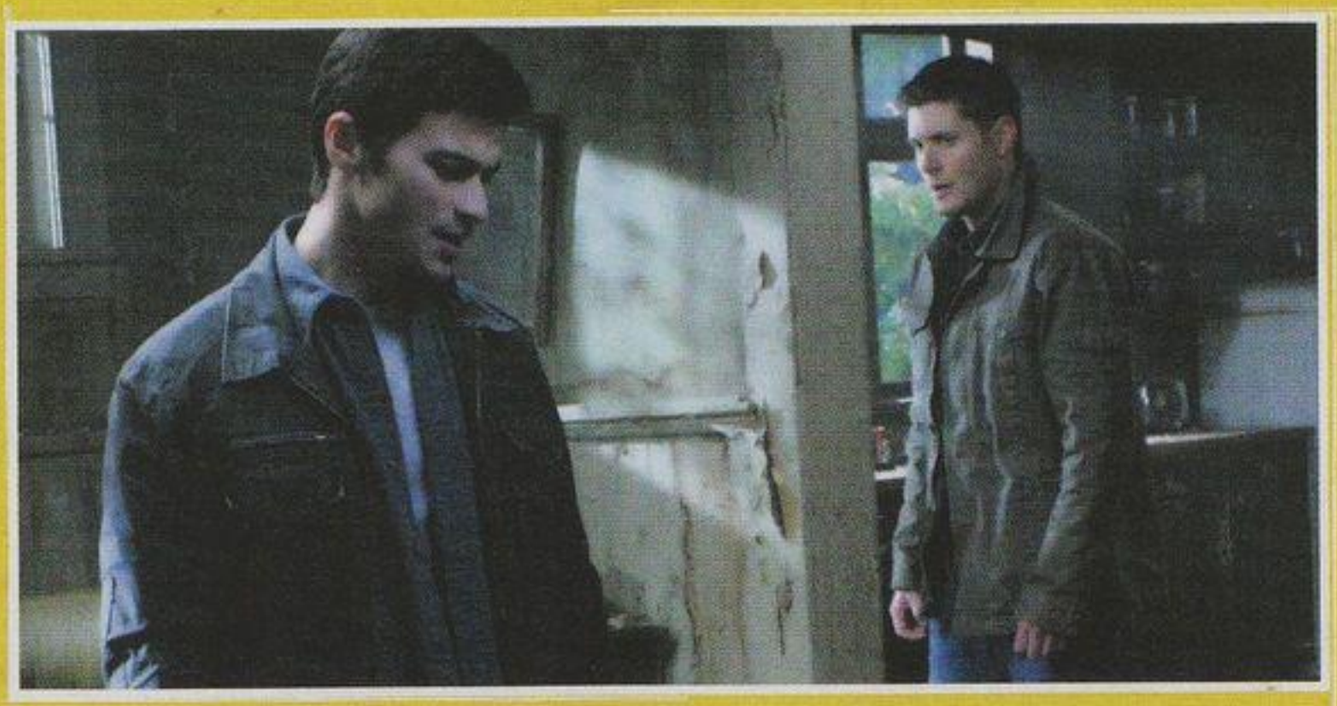
It would've been really cool and memorable to see John react that way! But since he didn't, what would you say is your most memorable scene from *Supernatural*?
I think the scenes when John becomes Michael are my favorite pieces of work that I've done thus far in my career.

Do you have a favorite line of dialogue from your Michael scenes?
Yeah, actually, I do. Michael had so many good lines, but there's a little moment where Michael turns back to Dean after telling him how his life was going to play out and how he has no say over it, and I say, "You can't fight city hall." That's definitely one of my favorite lines. They really did a good job with Michael. He's a really cool character to play.

Is there anything else about your experience with *Supernatural* that you'd like to share with the fans?
I went and did a *Supernatural* convention ["Asylum 3"] in Birmingham, England last summer and I met some great fans. The support for *Supernatural* is outstanding, so anything I can do for the fans, I'll do it in a second. It feels good to sit there and talk to them, and I love when they ask questions that I don't even know the answer to. I was asked so many background questions about John that I wasn't even aware of; I had to go home and restudy my character. It was great.

I just really wanna thank the fans and the people that read these articles and the people that support *Supernatural*. This show is so lucky to have support like that. It's really mind-blowing. But it's also understandable through my eyes, because I think this show, the actors, the team behind the scenes, everybody is just great.

Supernatural has the best fans, they really do. They asked me in Birmingham if I've ever been starstruck, and I was on stage and there were about 800, maybe 1,000 people in the audience, and I was like, "Yeah, right now!" At the time I'd only done the one episode, so to have such fan support, I was like, "I'm in awe of *you* guys!" It's not actors or music artists or anything that make me starstruck, it's the fan support that leaves me speechless. I told them then, and I'll say it again, *Supernatural* the first time around was one of the best experiences of my acting career, and now this second episode has absolutely capped it off. I'm smiling and I'm happy and I'm excited because it's my favorite thing I've ever done. I love playing Young John Winchester!



INTERVIEW
AMY
GUMENICK

MOTHER COURAGE

The young Mary Winchester had a bizarre time of it in *The Song Remains the Same*, going toe-to-toe with an angel and meeting two grown-up men who were her sons! We caught up with actress AMY GUMENICK to find out about pregnancy suits, crowbar fights, and 1970s fashions...

Words: Nicholas Knight

When we last spoke with Amy Gumenick, her *Supernatural* character, Young Mary Campbell, had made a deal with a demon to save Young John Winchester's life... and now John has returned the favor by making a deal with an angel to save Mary's life. But what Mary wants more than anything is to live a normal life with John, and with her memories wiped and pregnant with baby Dean, she finally sees a glimmer of hope for the future. Gumenick shares her thoughts on both Mary and her future in the *Supernatural* universe.

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: When you shot *In the Beginning*, did you have any idea that you'd be coming back for another episode?**

Amy Gumenick: I didn't. I definitely hoped that I'd come back, and I think with a show like *Supernatural* anything is possible, especially since they introduced time travel. So there was definitely talk of it, but nothing official.

Your episodes took place in the 1970s, but you weren't even born yet back then, so did you do any research to prepare for that aspect of the role?

Oh, yeah, that was so fun! One of my favorite things about acting is the research part of it. It's so rare that you get a role like this one where the research is so rich, and there's so much available to you. Because it's an era that I'm already interested in and know a bit about, it was especially fun for me to read up about what was going on at the

time; the fashion and the music. It was a fun collaboration with the design team with my wardrobe and hair and makeup to totally replicate that era.

When you first saw yourself in the mirror with your 1970s hair, makeup, and wardrobe, you must have thought, "Woah!"

Yeah, I saw my mom! It was crazy. My mom was like a flower child at that time, and we have pictures of her and the hair's exactly the same and the outfits are the same. I emailed her a picture my first day on set and she got a kick out of it. She felt like she was seeing herself back in time! I loved it. It was so fun.

It's one thing to travel back to your mother's era, but what was it like to play a mother? In the scene where you find out that Sam and Dean are your sons, when you were acting that out, was it hard to suddenly change to looking at these towering guys in a motherly way?

Definitely. I mean, that change happens so quickly – it's like in one line that they convince me. But it's like playing any role; just believe what you're saying. I think the way the role of Mary is written is very motherly, so she kind of innately had those qualities. It's not really out of character for her, whether or not they were her sons.

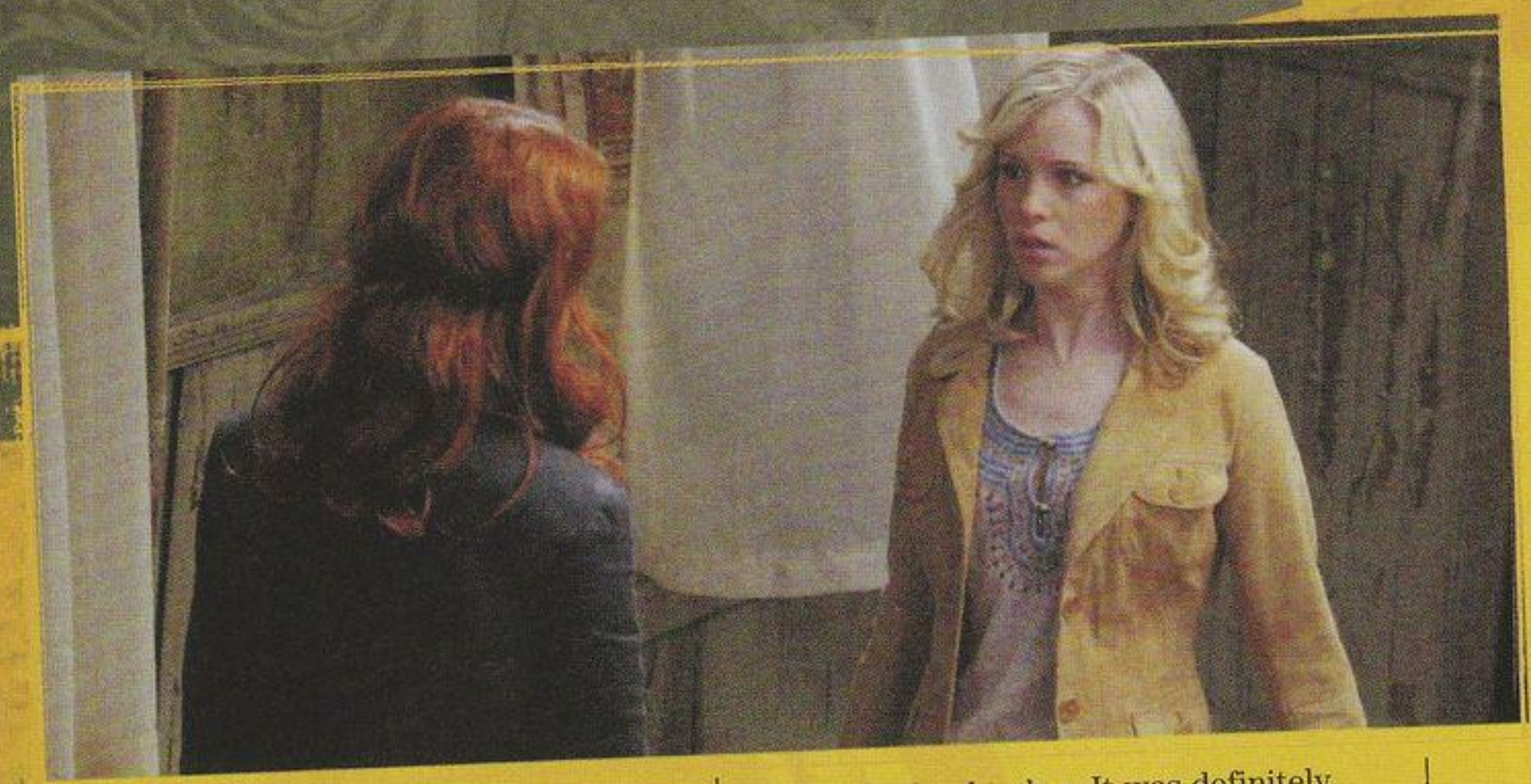
True, although in *The Song Remains the Same* we got to see more of Mary's warrior side as well. Did you enjoy doing the fight scenes?

Yeah, it's a fun challenge doing fight scenes, and something that I would love to do more of! I did all of my own fighting with Julie McNiven [angel Anna], but for the part where Mary actually smashes into the car, they wouldn't let me do it; I had a stunt double for that. I wanted to do it and I asked, I really tried, but it was a safety issue. My double was great, and she was able to do it in one take. They cut the fight just before the throw, my double jumped into her stunt, and then we picked it up with me in the windshield. It's pretty seamless.

"I THINK THE WAY THE ROLE OF MARY IS WRITTEN IS VERY MOTHERLY, SO SHE KIND OF INNATELY HAD THOSE QUALITIES."

INTERVIEW
AMY
GUMENICK

"IT'S A FUN CHALLENGE DOING FIGHT SCENES, AND SOMETHING THAT I WOULD LOVE TO DO MORE OF!"



During that fight you ram a crowbar through Anna's chest. Retractable knives are common for pretending to stab someone, but how'd they handle that for a crowbar?
That was actually shot over a few days and we did it several different ways. The first part when we did the crowbar scene, I didn't come in contact with Julie, I sort of went just in front of her body, which with where the camera was positioned would look like there was contact. Then when we did the reverse to show the actual hit, they'd made a half-crowbar, so I dug it into her chest, but *not hard*, obviously. Then when she pulls it out, it's CGI. They digitally inserted the rest of the crowbar so it looks like she's pulling it out, which is actually a big challenge for us because it's so technical and you have to stay completely still and our positions have to be perfect. Then there was a third way that we did it where we picked up from just after the stab where I'm thrusting it into her chest and I release my hand and you see it stuck in her. At that point they had a mechanism that was built into her coat that was glued to her. It was definitely a long process to get that scene right, but I think it turned out great.

If you were to discover that rogue angels and all the supernatural monsters were real, do you think you'd want to fight them, to rid the world of them, or would you run and hide and hope you never saw another one?
I think I would want to stay as far away as possible! However, it'd be pretty fun to fight them...

It would be fun! So, if you did wind up becoming a hunter, would you keep it a secret from your spouse (or whoever) or would you tell him so he could fight by your side?
Well, I don't know. I think that, like Mary, I really wouldn't have much of a choice but to keep it secret. I think when something like that gets out, the last thing you want is for it to be publicized that you're fighting demons, and I think most people don't believe in that kind of stuff, so there's also the fear of not being taken seriously. There's always the fear of putting others in danger. I think if you're not trained to fight monsters, you should probably stay away! I'm not a very good secret-keeper, so I think that I would want to tell everyone about it, but I think I would have to keep it quiet.

Speaking of secrets, was it hard to keep a straight face when Mary and Dean were trying to keep how they knew each other a secret from John while Sam was weirding out over meeting his young mother?
That scene at the door really sticks out as one of my favorites. John is trying to figure out who they are and where they came from, and there were just so many subtleties and looks that Jared, Jensen, and I exchanged. I felt like we were having a totally separate scene with just our eyes and no dialogue. It was really fun.

Your "eye dialogue" *was* pretty awesome, but what would you say is your favorite line of actual dialogue from *The Song Remains the Same*?
I think the last scene of the episode, where Mary is in the nursery having a little conversation with the unborn baby Dean and she's calming him down and soothing him. There's a small monologue and I think that's my favorite. "It's okay, baby. Angels are watching over you..." Getting to wear a pregnancy suit was a fun little treat!

You were at the *Supernatural* convention Asylum in Birmingham, England last May. What was that like?
It was wonderful, it was crazy, it was absolutely nothing like what I expected. I'm not sure what I expected, but when

people ask me about it the best way I can describe it is if I imagine going back in time to a Beatles concert. Walking into that main hall to the deafening screams of the fans and the blinding flashes of their cameras was just unbelievable. I think the thing that stood out to me most was just the incredible support and dedication from the fans. It really was unlike anything I'd ever seen or experienced, and to be on the other side of that was insane. It was really touching to see what a difference the show has made to peoples' lives and how much they love it. Without them *Supernatural* wouldn't be where it is now, it wouldn't have been on for five years.

With at least another year to come! Do you think Young Mary will be back in season six?

I think that there are still unanswered questions in terms of Sam and Dean's past having to do with Mary, so I definitely think there's room for another episode, but you never know. It would be amazing, so I hope so!

Matt Cohen thought we should do a spin-off of *The Adventures of Young John and Mary*.

Why not? You never know! When I came on to the show, Mary was dead to begin with, so at least I wouldn't have to worry about being killed off...

INTERVIEW
SAMANTHA
SMITH

Words: Nicholas Knight

BROTHERS

Mary Winchester may be dead, but it takes more than death to stop a *Supernatural* character from coming back. Actress Samantha Smith talks to *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about Mary's return from beyond the grave in *When the Levee Breaks* and *Dark Side of the Moon*...

Talking to Samantha Smith, a.k.a. Mary Winchester, it's obvious that when she says, "I'm a big fan of the show," she's not just saying that to be polite, she really does follow the show. "And it does not have anything to do with my involvement with the show," she insists. "I'm a blip on the screen in comparison to the whole show. I just think they do such an incredible job with it. I think it's funny, smart, and introspective. I like the angels and the Apocalypse story arc; it adds a whole new level to the show. I wish the show got more credit, because *Supernatural* does not get the recognition it deserves."

Smith also feels that Amy Gumenick deserves a lot of recognition for her portrayal of a younger version of Smith's character. "Amy could not have done a better job!" she enthuses. "I think she was perfectly cast as the young Mary. I don't think we look exactly alike, but she and I have a very similar essence. It's very believable that she's a younger, edgier version of me, and I think it makes sense that her Mary could grow up into the Mary that I play."

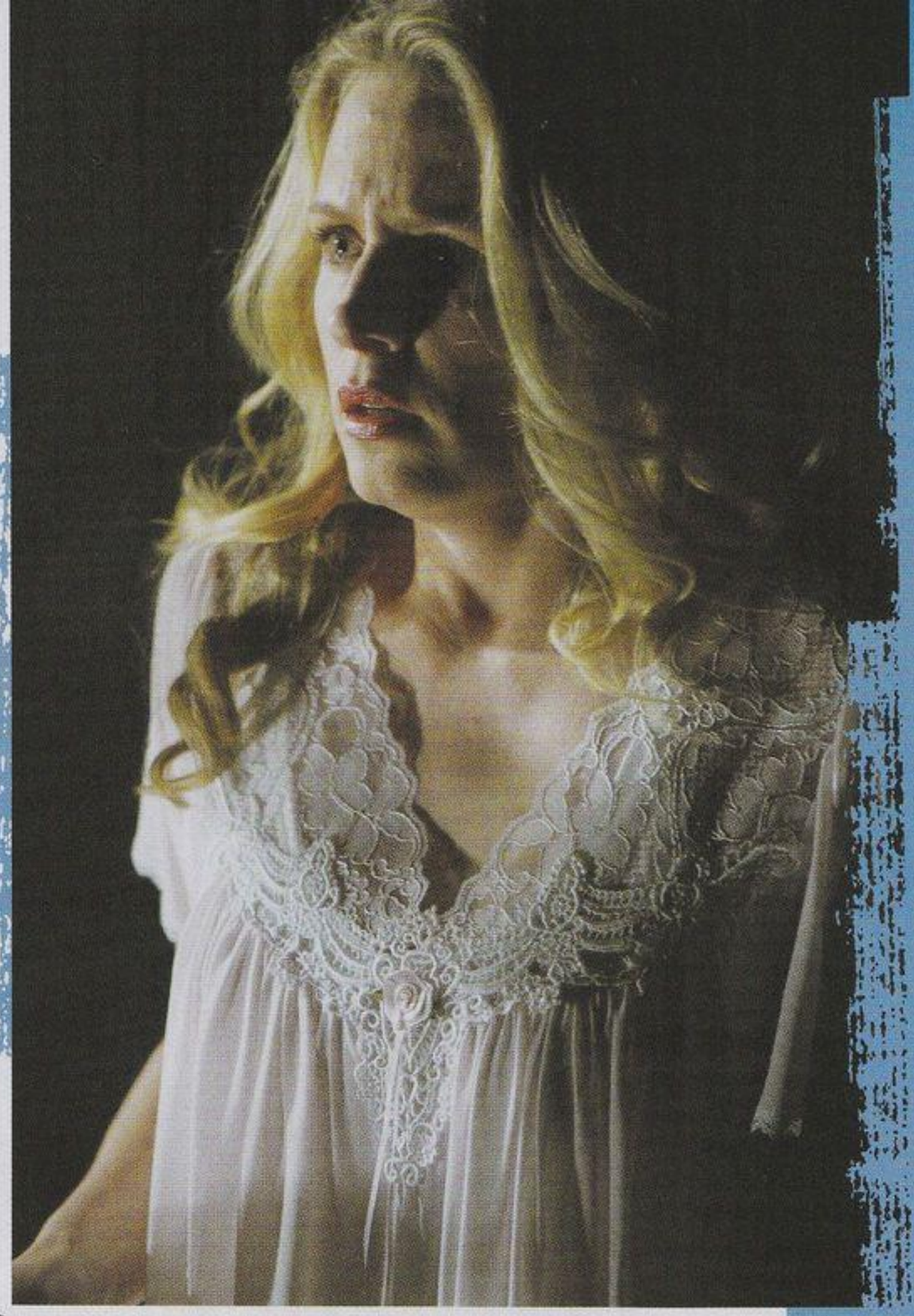
In fact, watching the young version of Mary has helped Smith better understand her character. "It gives me a whole basis for my strength because I'm not just sweet Mary; I have a whole different background, but one that allows me to be that sweet on the outside."

Nonetheless, Smith doesn't foresee having all the aspects of young Mary reflected in future appearances of her Mary. In other words, she doesn't expect to find a script that focuses on her as a hunter kicking some ass. "No," she says. "That certainly would be fun, but I don't anticipate that happening. I think that Amy has the market cornered in terms of Mary as a demon-kicking person! I think by the time my version of the character came along, she's put all that behind her. You do see little elements of her strength, like when she's

"AMY GUMENICK COULD NOT HAVE DONE A BETTER JOB! I THINK SHE WAS PERFECTLY CAST AS THE YOUNG MARY."

willing to take on the ghost in the episode *Home*, but I don't think you're ever going to see me as Mary in fisticuffs."

Regardless of whether we see her fighting as a hunter, as a protective mother, or any other way, or just cutting the crusts off sandwiches, we're grateful we get to see her at all. "I'm always a little surprised when I find out," she admits. "Somehow they keep finding ways to bring back a dead character. They're very creative." Even with the show's highly creative writers, Smith's character wasn't featured in season three. Which was probably for the best... seeing as how Samantha was pregnant throughout the season. "It would've been awkward," she chuckles, "although you probably couldn't really tell in that nightgown. It worked out



well for me, and I was very pleased to come back again the last couple seasons."

The actress was also pleased with how she got to first show a slightly meaner side of Mary in *When the Levee Breaks* and then play an essentially evil version of Mary in *Dark Side of the Moon*. "I thought it was so fun," she exclaims. "It was challenging to change a character that I'd been portraying in such a specific way for so long. Mary's very calm and nurturing and it's been all about her strength, and then with this whole evil kind of thing coming out, I had to keep it within the parameters of still being my character, but with bringing a whole new dimension to it. I didn't want to suddenly be completely different, but I wanted to still keep it confusing to the people watching."

In fact, she's so evil that her eyes flash yellow! "Fortunately, they didn't make me do the contacts," Smith comments. "Because it's not for a whole scene, it's just for one little flash, so they just used CG. But we had to do special effects with the blood. They just squirted it in my mouth and then my teeth were all bloody. I have to tell you, we did it five or six times, and the fake blood is some kind of sugar liquid, so I was on such a sugar high because they put this liquid right on my gums and it soaked in and I was completely flying for about an hour!" At least it was a sweet treat, right? "No, it was nasty – it tasted like wax candy."

We're sure that eating wax candy must be someone's idea of Heaven, but it's definitely not Dean's. His involves being a little boy when his mother was still alive and having her cut the crusts off his sandwiches for him. "We had a devil of a time with cutting the sandwiches," Smith reveals. "There were crusts everywhere! It took us forever to figure out the logistics of that. It was hysterical." Since Smith now has a small child of her own, at least she'll be able to use the crust-cutting lesson at home. "We're going to try to get him to eat the crusts," she says, "but if I do cut the crusts off, I'm not going to have to do it in any way that's camera-friendly. I can just whack them off and throw them in the trash. I don't have to figure out what to do with them and be careful not to drop them on the table. That's such a little thing, but I had to put a lot of thought into how to do it. It was tricky."

That happy scene in the Winchester kitchen took an unexpected turn when we discovered that Mary and John were having marital problems, but Smith wasn't disappointed to learn that Mary and John hadn't had a storybook relationship. "It's just so much more realistic that way than a perfect relationship," she feels. "And in the end they did have a good relationship. He came back and it was all good, and he was heartbroken when she died. Sometimes I think that a relationship that survives adversity has a much better chance because you have to fight your way through."

The big mystery, of course, is why were the Winchesters fighting? Was Mary keeping secrets about hunting monsters that led John to mistakenly believe she was hiding something else from him, like an affair with another man? "I did put a lot of thought into what they were fighting about," Smith shares, "but I don't want to say what I came up with, because I just made it up and I never spoke to Eric about it. I don't want to say something that's completely wrong. It could've been untrue, but it worked for me in the moment."

Another thing that worked for Smith was the show's version of Heaven. "I thought that was so creative," she says. "It was a nice thing to imagine. It'd be great to get to continually relive your best memories. If that's really an option, that would be awesome."

One thing she feels certain about is that the Heaven we saw was the real *Supernatural* Heaven, and not just some Trickster-style joke Zachariah was playing on the Winchester brothers to make them believe God had deserted them. "No, no, I think it was real," she says.

What Smith finds truly unreal, however, is the fan support she's received. "I am so overwhelmed and flattered with the amount of love and thought that goes into the character by the fans. For a character that's only been in six episodes in five seasons, to have such an impact is so wonderful. I never in a million years thought that that would happen to my character when I first started. I didn't expect my character to come back after the pilot! When you die within the first minute-and-a-half of a show, you don't expect it to go on for five years. It's incredible!"

The fans certainly keep Smith on her toes at conventions. Despite her following the show and loving her role as Mary, and contemplating such things as why John and Mary almost separated, the actress still gets stumped by some of the questions from the fans. "All the time," she admits. "Sometimes I just make stuff up. It's like, 'What would she have said to Sam [if her ghost had actually confronted him in the panic room during his demon-blood detox]?' And I'm like, 'She probably would've yelled at him.' Sometimes I can speculate, but sometimes the fans come up with questions that are so off the map that I have no idea. So I say, 'You tell me what you think and that's the answer I'll use, because I have no idea.'"

Another wonderful thing about *Supernatural* fans is that they keep an eye on the show's stars' other projects, as well. "I had a lot of cross-support when I was in *Transformers*," states Smith. "And every once in a while I'll have a commercial running or something and I'll get a lot of comments in chat rooms and so forth where *Supernatural* fans will say, 'Hey, it was Mary in that car commercial!' I have a fan page on Facebook, and there are people constantly writing on there about Mary and sending their love and support. It's so sweet. It means a lot to me."

Smith is hoping that the fans will also support the feature she did with Rob Schneider called *The Chosen One*... when it comes out. "I don't know when it's coming out," she says. "I don't even know if it's finished. I think that they wanted to reshoot the end and I don't know if they ever did." Schneider's character hasn't been chosen to be the vessel of an angel, like Sam and Dean, but the fate of the world does rest on his shoulders. "It's a dramedy about a down-on-his-luck car salesman who's chosen by a mystical Brazilian tribe to be the one to save the Earth." Aside from the mystical element, Smith says, "it's not supernatural-themed at all," but we're sure her fans will still want to see her in it.

More importantly, though, we all want to see her back on *Supernatural* in season six! "I think at this point it's getting harder and harder to get me in there," Smith says. "I'm hoping that I'll get to come back again, of course, but I'm not counting on it. It's already amazing the ways they've come up with for bringing me back. But who knows? Never underestimate the Kripke crew!"

"IN THE END JOHN AND MARY DID HAVE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP. HE CAME BACK AND IT WAS ALL GOOD, AND HE WAS HEARTBROKEN WHEN SHE DIED."

Christian's Thoughts

Words: Nicholas Knight

As a cousin of Sam and Dean, Christian Campbell was a hunter who proved to be a definite black sheep of the family when it turned out he was possessed by a demon all along. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* talked to actor Corin Nemec to find out what it was like playing the hunter with a secret...

To many, Corin Nemec is best known for his starring role in the early '90s series, *Parker Lewis Can't Lose*, and the actor recently had a great time guest-starring on *Supernatural* as Christian Campbell. Nemec has also been seen in numerous genre projects, from creature features like *Mansquito* and *Sea Beast* to his memorable roles in *The Stand* and *Stargate SG-1*. The actor tells *The Official Supernatural Magazine* what it's been like portraying Sam and Dean's cousin, Christian Campbell, and how he felt about the revelation that Christian was possessed by a demon...

The Official Supernatural Magazine: You've done a lot of "genre" work – is that something you're drawn to?

Corin Nemec: I am. I'm more of a fan of science fiction than horror, except for some of the classic horror movies like *The Shining* and *Rosemary's Baby*. In fact, *Rosemary's Baby* is one of my all-time favorite movies ever. But as far as the sci-fi genre goes, I've been a fan of sci-fi since I was a kid. I'm from the original *Star Wars* generation, so when that movie came out, my mom took me and my sister to the movie theater and my life changed after that. It really broadened my imagination. The special effects were so cutting edge at the time, no one had ever seen anything like it; it was definitely mind-blowing. Flash-forward many years later and I'm part of something like *Stargate SG-1*, and the quality of that show far exceeded anything I'd imagined it would be for a TV series like that. And now again, to be a part of something like *Supernatural*, where the quality of the show from production design to cinematography is feature quality, I'm stoked!

Did your work on *Stargate SG-1* prepare you for the kind of tension that comes with *Supernatural*?

Yeah, sure, and there was also *The Stand*, which was a real cult success that has a really strong following since back then.

When they found out you were going to be on *Supernatural*, were your fans excited?

Yeah, absolutely. A lot of people that are fans of *Stargate SG-1* are also fans of *Supernatural*, so the crossover is really solid and I've had a lot of extremely positive emails at my fan site, corin.com, which has been great.

With Mark getting his neck snapped in *Two and a Half Men*, did you immediately worry that your days were numbered, too?

Any type of scenes of that nature with other characters that you're close to and whatnot definitely can make one a little nervous when you're not a series regular. It makes you wonder about the longevity of the character you're playing.

So how did you react when you first read the script for *Family Matters* and saw that you got your neck snapped?

Of course, my initial reaction was, "Noooooo! Crap, I'm canned!" And then a page later I was alive and in my demon form, so I was extremely happy.

INTERVIEW
CORIN
NEMEC

From an acting standpoint, people always talk about it being more fun to play the villain, so did you like the change from being a heroic hunter to being a demon?

What's cool is the way they set up the character arc; there was always this subtle kind of edginess about Christian that was hiding something potentially darker. When that revelation occurred, it just seemed like a natural transition.

True. There was always the underlying question of, "What is that guy's problem?" So in a way you were probably relieved to learn that he wasn't being a jerk to Dean, that he was just evil.

Exactly.

Is there anything you did to make Christian come across as more demonic in *Caged Heat*?

Unfortunately, I didn't get too much time to play around as the demon Christian, but from an actor's standpoint, I liked playing the demon. For me it's not about portraying some melodramatic type of personality when being a demon version of him. All it's about is the shell being pulled back and there are no more social niceties, no more social veneer to what the character's M.O. is. It's not so much that there's a dynamic change in the character as much as there's just a revealing of the character's true nature.

As you pointed out, you didn't get to play demon-Christian very long, so did that bum you out a bit?

Well, it was really nice actually, because Sera Gamble had given me a call before I read the script and informed me where things were at and gave me a heads-up about the sudden demise of demon-Christian. That was very gracious of Sera.

She's an awesome lady and I really appreciated that. She said that it didn't necessarily mean that they wouldn't be able to revisit my character later on. Because of the nature of the show, anything is possible! I wasn't as bummed about being offed as I might have been.

How did you feel about the way you were offed? Considering the animosity between Christian and Dean, were you disappointed that you didn't get to kick Dean's ass before he killed you?
Oh, I don't think that I would've been able to kick Dean's ass, anyway. He's one tough hombre. In the best of all worlds, sure, it would've been fun to have a little bit more of a climactic death, but at the same time it was kind of against the grain the way that they did it anyway, which is always cool. It's sudden and shocking and jarring; the audience isn't expecting it. I think that it worked.

What's your favorite Christian Campbell line?
I liked the moment in the second episode when we're in our hideout preparing for the upcoming confrontation with the shapeshifter and Dean is questioning our intentions with the kid and I say, "*Your* mind goes right to torture, Dean, don't assume *everyone's* does." I liked that because it's the point where my frustration with him comes to a peak. I'm feeling like our integrity is being challenged. And with us all being family, I feel like he should already know the answer to that question, that we're not that type.

Christian was killed while torturing Meg. What was it like working with Rachel Miner?
She's great. What a sweetheart! I was familiar with her work from *Bully* and a couple other things. She was just a consummate professional and really there for the other actors in the scenes. I loved working with her.

That was a great scene, but don't let that comment influence your answer to this next question: Do you have a favorite scene from your episodes?
When we go into Dean's house and we're kind of invading his space, there's a moment where he comes in and he sees us moving his stuff around and taking over his living room. There's definitely a nice little moment there that's light-hearted in a way on our side and a little bit offended on his side. That was a moment that I really enjoyed playing.

My favorite scene that I got to participate in out of all of the episodes that I did [however] was the one between Christian and Dean in the hallway when Dean is trying to break into Samuel's office. That was my favorite acting scene.

Dean looked ready to snap your neck, but the Alpha Vampire saved him the trouble. From a technical standpoint, did you have to turn your head to an extremely uncomfortable position to make it look realistic?
No, it's really about the motion of the shoulders and the whipping of the neck at the same time. The whole body movement is what really sells it. It's not just about the neck; it's accenting that motion of the neck with the rest of the body to make it look really violent.

> "I didn't get too much time to play around as the demon Christian, but from an actor's standpoint, I liked playing a demon."

When you saw the final cut, what was it like watching yourself die, seeing the knife come popping out of you?
It's not the first time I've seen myself die on television or in a movie. The thing for me about dying as a character is that I'm always trying to find a new way to approach it – a new way to land, a different way for the arms and legs to fall.

What else have you worked on recently that you'd like *Supernatural* fans to check out?
I produced and starred in a show called *Nuclear Family*. Writer-producer Kyle Rankin put together this great pilot that's a post-apocalyptic action-adventure. We raised the financing independently and it turned out fantastic. We've been shopping that around as a possible series. Kyle's looking at raising more money to turn it into a feature. It's now a pilot, so we'd have to shoot another 45 to 50 minutes' worth of material to turn it into a feature. I'm excited about that possibility as well, but it would be a really good series. Either way, keep your eyeballs out for it!

What was it like behind-the-scenes working on the set of *Supernatural*?
The funny thing is that Jared and Jensen have these little electric off-road motorcycles that are for five-year-olds, and those big dudes cruise back and forth from their trailers to the set on these tiny things. It's hilarious. It's like something you'd see at the circus – these big guys on these tiny little bikes driving around the back lot. But the bikes do look fun.

You and executive producer Phil Sgriccia worked together on *For the Very First Time*, so did you reminisce about that?
It's funny because I had never met him in person. Phil was the editor on that movie-of-the-week, which I did when I was like 18 or 19. It was pretty cool to meet him and get to talk about that project. There were a few funny things that happened back then that he didn't know about. For instance, there was a moment when we had this banquet scene in *For the Very First Time* where they had this full pig, this big stuffed pig with the head on and everything. I'd gotten really close to the crew on that set and I was making comments like, "Man, who could ever eat that? I like bacon and all, but I could never eat the pig with its head there and its eyes staring at me! Can't we remove the head?" I just kept making jokes and stuff. So at the end of that shoot day, I got in my car and they had put the pig's severed head on a platter on my passenger seat. It was funny.

Is there anything else you'd like to add about your *Supernatural* experience?
I've done other shows that have been on for years, and the difference in the experience on set between some of the other shows I've done and *Supernatural* is that the other shows aren't as relaxed and inviting, and not as family-oriented in the way people interrelate with each other. On some other shows that I've done that are very successful and long running, there's much more rigidity to the process. I just found that on *Supernatural* it was so relaxed. Even when I did the first episode, it was around halfway through the first day I felt like I had been there for five seasons. It was very welcoming and a great atmosphere, a great working environment for an actor.

This show is such a well-oiled machine. They really know what they're doing and know how to run a good shop. For me, it's been a great pleasure.

FAMILY BUSINESS

Gwen Campbell was the hunter and relative of the Winchesters who found herself the victim of Samuel's shifting loyalties. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with actress Jessica Heafey after filming *And Then There Were None* to find out more about playing Sam and Dean's ill-fated cousin...

The Official Supernatural Magazine: How aware were you of *Supernatural* before being cast as Gwen Campbell?

Jessica Heafey: I was very aware of it. I'd watched the show beforehand. It's a fun series to watch and it's evolved in an interesting way. The way they weave characters in and out makes sense to me as opposed to somebody popping out of the blue to give you a new storyline. I certainly was not aware of the huge fanbase or the conventions, which I'm learning about now.

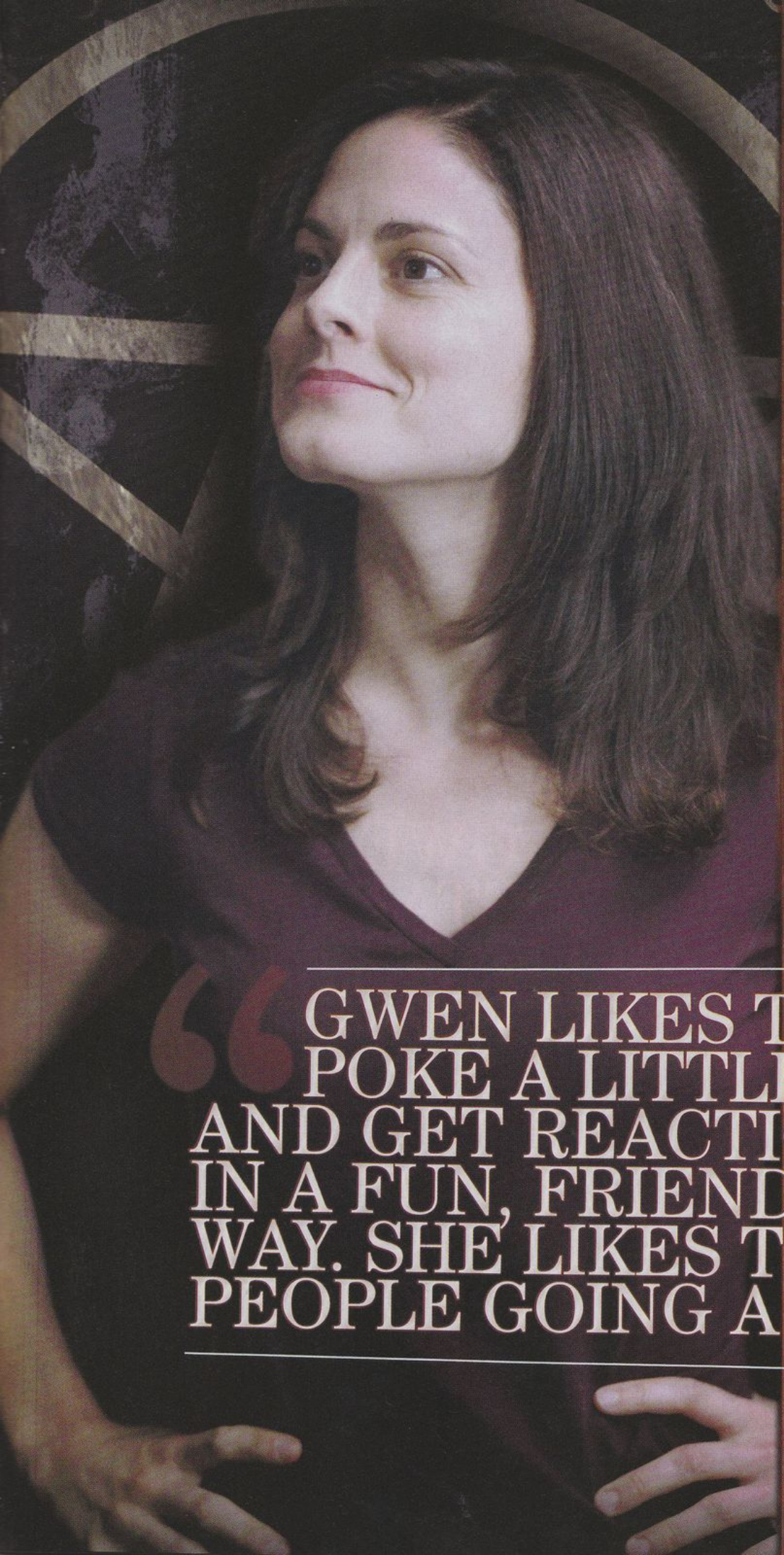
What was the audition like for the role?

Well, I auditioned for several roles on *Supernatural* before I ever went out for Gwen. The [other roles] were nothing that were recurring; they were just fun little moments in parts or scenes. I'm guessing that's how the producers got to know me a little bit. I've never actually had the conversation, but I got the sense after they had seen me a few times auditioning for different types of roles, I like to think they saw me in the part when the character of Gwen was being written. Not to say it was written for me, but they maybe thought, "Oh, you know who would be good for this?"

From her first words "My God you have delicate features for a hunter!" in the script, what was your initial impression of Gwen?

Obviously with that very first comment, Gwen likes to

Words: Bryan Cairns



poke a little bit and get reactions in a fun, friendly way. She likes to get people going a bit. The more assertive and aggressive side of her blends in well with the fact that she's a hunter. Gwen is not the girl who needs saving. It kind of set the tone between Dean and her since it was their first meeting.

Except for a few notable exceptions, the hunters seem to be one big boys club! How do you think she stacked up to her cousins Christian and Mark?
She absolutely stacked up very well with them, whether they perceived that or not. Everybody does look out for Gwen and give her perhaps slightly safer jobs to do sometimes, which can be a little tiring and frustrating. There's no doubt that Gwen could hold her own.

Some fans felt Gwen followed Samuel a little blindly.
Until the point Gwen discovered that Samuel is taking orders from a demon, that may be the case. I wouldn't say she followed him blindly. They had built up a trust and a certain way of working together. Everybody did that in that they took the lead of the person who knew what the next gig was or the next goal. In that sense,

> "GWEN LIKES TO POKE A LITTLE BIT AND GET REACTIONS IN A FUN, FRIENDLY WAY. SHE LIKES TO GET PEOPLE GOING A BIT.

Gwen certainly followed Samuel. But Gwen started to look at Samuel a little closer and was a little more wary of him once she discovered he was taking orders from Crowley, and that's what she'd been doing too without even knowing it. And in the latest episode [*And Then There Were None*], if Gwen didn't already have suspicions and disappointments from Samuel, I don't think she would have reacted that quickly to go check with Dean. It's certainly something that's been building, and it's been happening in the episodes you weren't seeing Gwen.

How was it filming that scene with two Samuels, where the Shapeshifter was impersonating him, in *Two and a Half Men*?

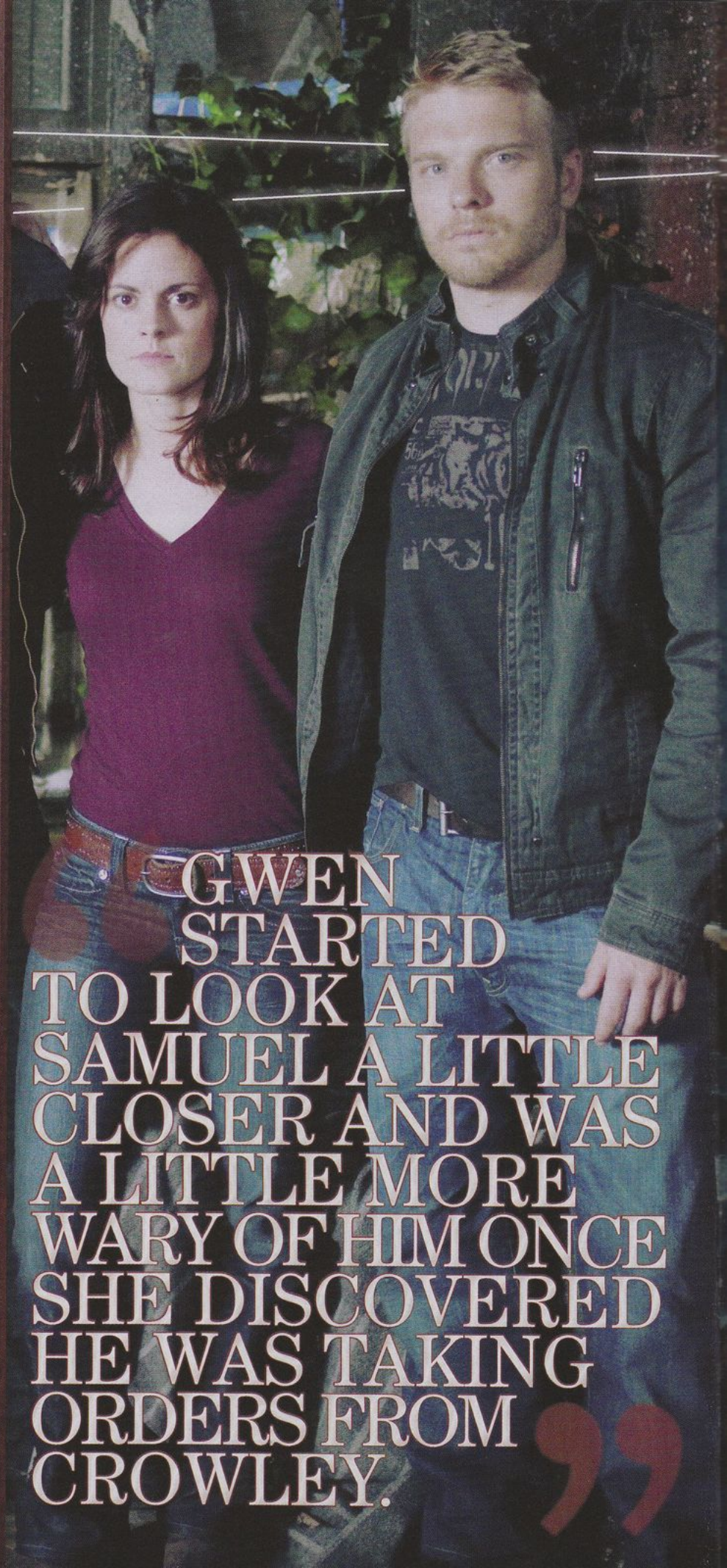
That was a lot of fun to shoot. Mitch [Pileggi] had a stand-in, this guy about his size who was bald so that from the back, we couldn't see it actually wasn't Mitch. Obviously, we had to just cover that carefully and kept it real for the audience. Mitch always looks like this big, gruff guy, but he was always so very careful making sure he wasn't really hurting or choking me.

Gwen was the first one to fire a round into the shapeshifter too.

Absolutely! We're all covering each others' backs. If one of us is getting attacked, we're going to protect each other. We're a team, we're a family, and this is what's happening. Certainly when that didn't work, it's "What the heck is going on?" There's fear she could be toast next, so now what is she going to try?

With Mark running interference, having his neck snapped, you trying to escape, being grabbed by the throat, and the shapeshifter being shot, there was a lot of action going on.

We broke that up a lot just to make sure we got all the coverage we needed for the scene. Everything is happening all at once so when you see Gwen shooting Samuel, you have the camera at that angle. When you actually see Samuel being shot, that's another. We cover wide as much as we can to capture all the finer details. It was definitely a long scene to shoot.



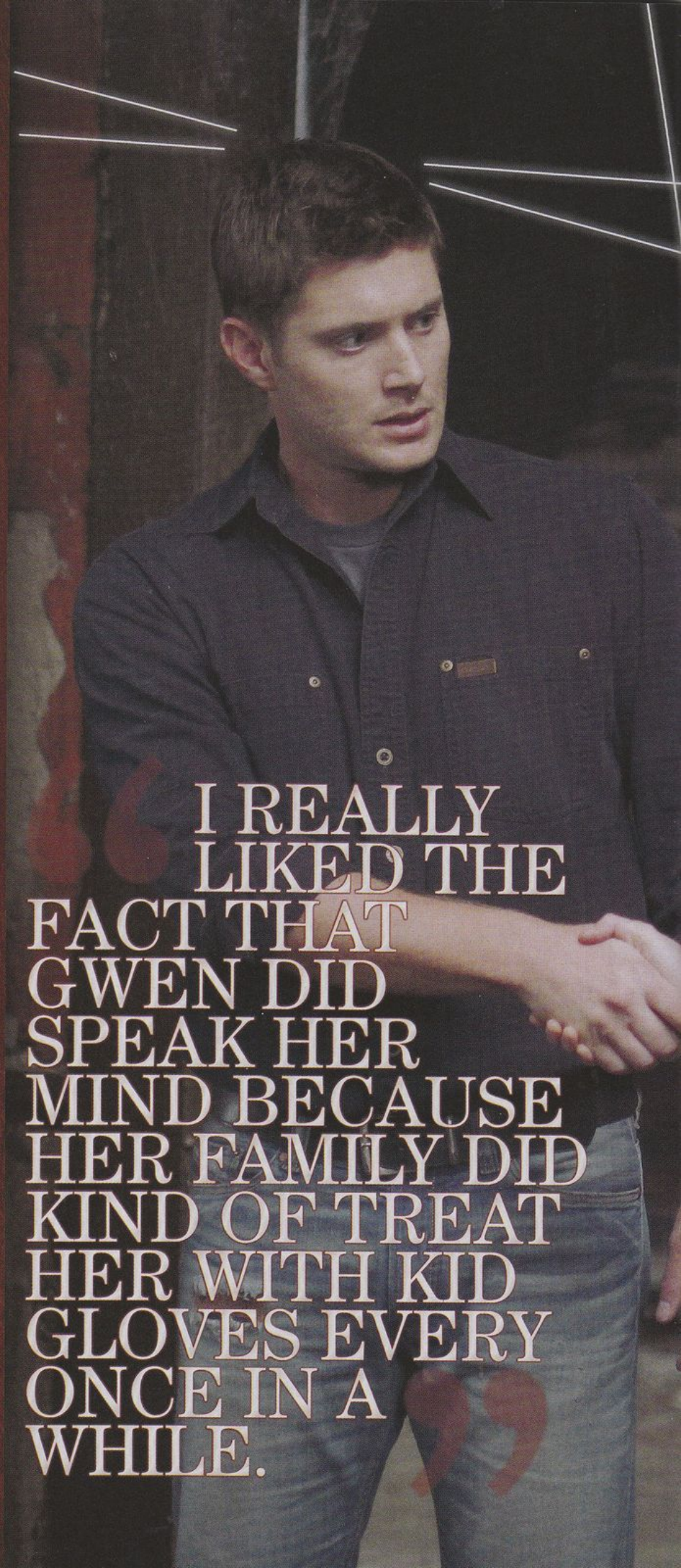
"GWEN STARTED TO LOOK AT SAMUEL A LITTLE CLOSER AND WAS A LITTLE MORE WARY OF HIM ONCE SHE DISCOVERED HE WAS TAKING ORDERS FROM CROWLEY."

mystery. If they revisited those days, what would you like the writers to explore with Gwen?
Her fighting ability, because Sam doesn't just trust Samuel; he trusts Gwen, Christian, and Matt! We've all taken the year to prove to one another. [I'd like to] explore what Gwen's role is in the family.

How was it working alongside Jared, Jensen, and Mitch?
It was great. They're a dream. They're fun and all know what they're doing. Things get done quickly and efficiently. I'm sure you've heard that Jared and Jensen are both hilarious in their own ways. It was easy [working with them].

Since you brought up their sense of humor, does that mean you had a gag reel moment with them?
In one of those last scenes I shot alongside Mitch, and Jared was off-camera. We were talking and it was a serious conversation. Samuel is being confronted and Jared is off-camera sort of whispering sweet nothings into the cameraman's ear. And then he starts to kind of dance with him as though he's going to start bumping and grinding. Mitch is the one who had to talk, so I'm standing next to him thinking, "Please let this scene end quickly!" I don't know how Mitch did the scene without laughing. I ended up looking at a very interesting spot on the floor because I was going to lose it! Finally, Mitch asked if this was going to keep going, because we couldn't keep it in any longer. It was amazing the cameraman was able to keep doing his work with all of that going on around him.

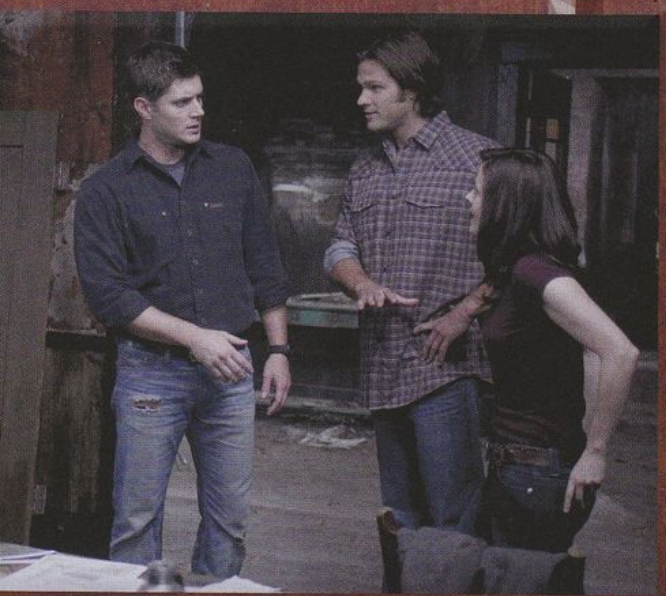
With her tough attitude, did you have a favorite Gwen scene or line of dialogue?
I really liked the fact that Gwen did speak her mind because [her family] did kind of treat her with kid gloves every once in a while. In the spirit of working together as a family and team, Gwen did what was needed of her but not without the acknowledgement of "You know what, guys? I know what you are doing here and it's a pain in the ass, but I'll do what needs to be done." That kind of rubbed on me personally early on cause I remember at one point we were all sitting around a table shooting a scene where we were


I REALLY LIKED THE FACT THAT GWEN DID SPEAK HER MIND BECAUSE HER FAMILY DID KIND OF TREAT HER WITH KID GLOVES EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.

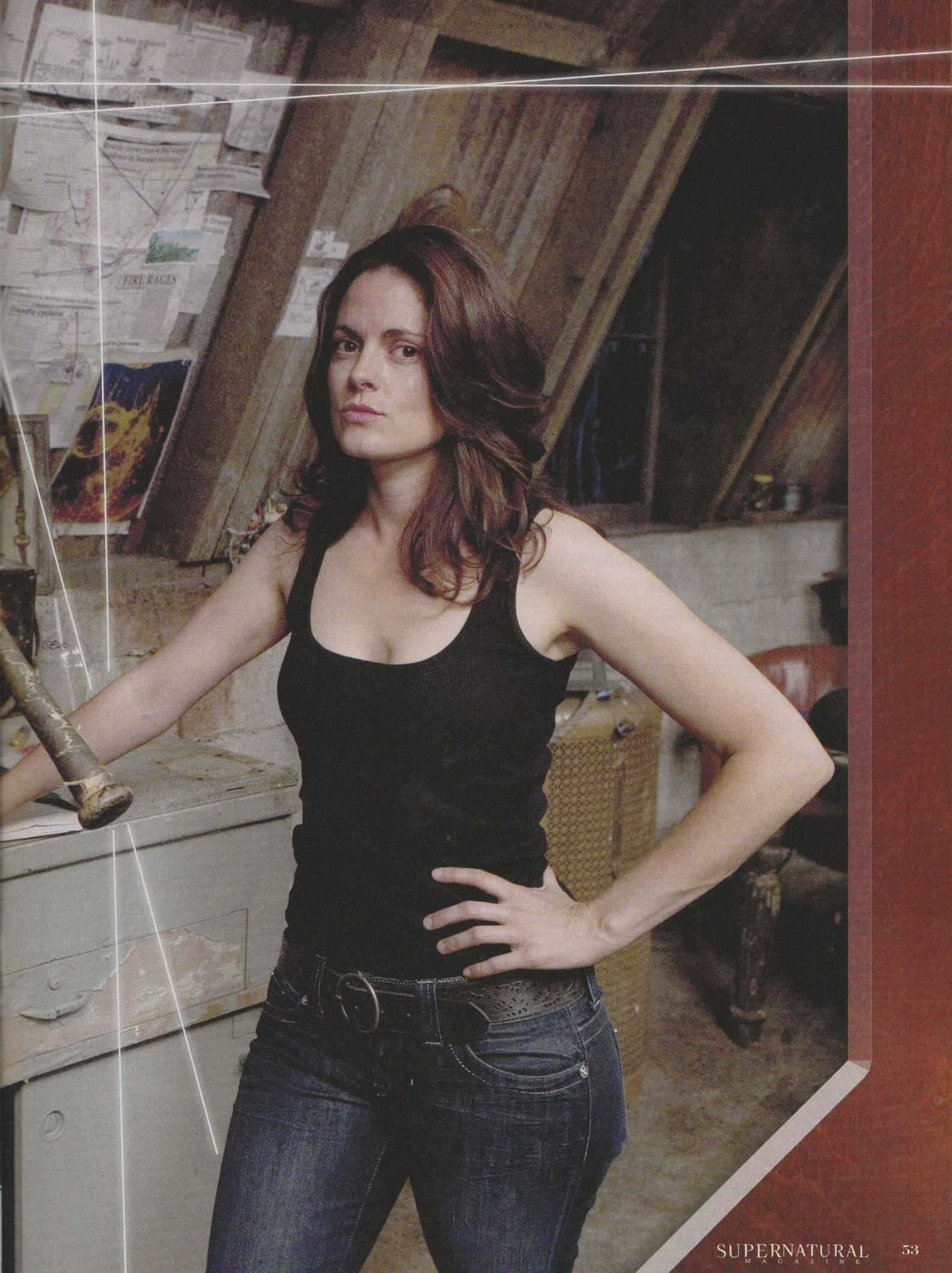
preparing to go hunting. All the guys were sitting there sharpening knives and I'm filling syringes with some dead man's blood! I was like "Nice, nice! Everybody's doing it to me now!"

You mentioned the *Supernatural* conventions earlier. Have you encountered any of the show's fans?
A little bit on Facebook, but I haven't been to any of the conventions yet. There's definitely a big fanbase on Facebook. I'm on Facebook and I remember when Jim Beaver Facebooked me. I messaged him and said "Dude, be honest. If I accept your friendship, am I going to get bombarded with Facebook requests [from fans]?" I'm hardly on it and it's all friends and family [for me]. Some people use it professionally, but I use it personally. I always feel bad when I don't respond to certain requests, so I don't know how other people do it. Fans who have approached me have been really great. I tell them 'I do use it for personal use so I really appreciate the request, but I hope you'll understand this area is for me.'" People are awesome though, and give compliments.

How would you sum up your *Supernatural* experience?
It was great and so much fun. The whole cast and crew have been shooting together for years now. It's just a great family. Everybody works efficiently, they have fun, and they know when to get it together to get the shot. Everybody is fun, respectful, and professional. It was awesome!



GWEN HAD BEEN ROLLING WITH SAM FOR A YEAR, BUT NEITHER KNEW MUCH ABOUT THE OTHER ON A PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL LEVEL AS A DEMON HUNTER.

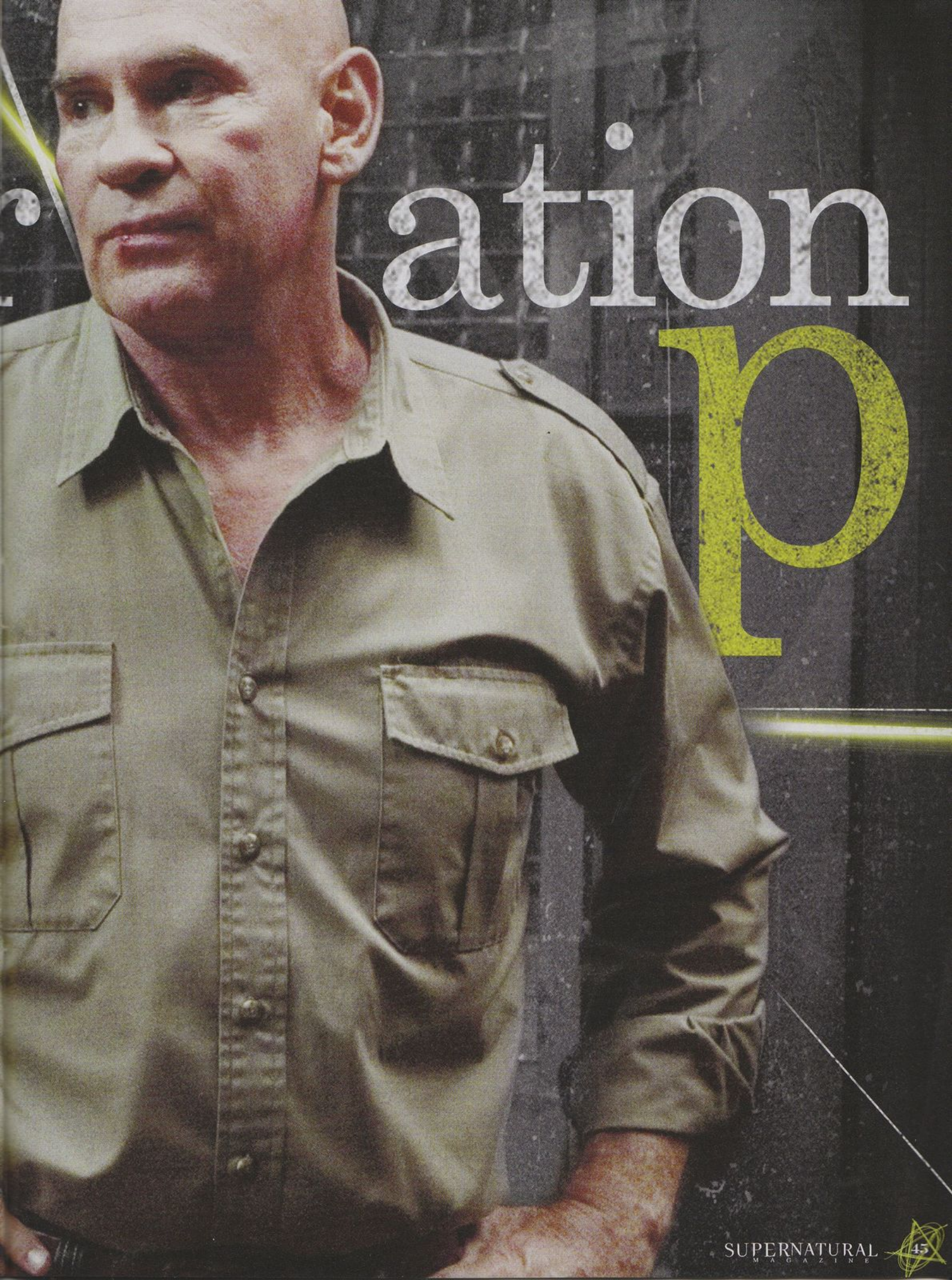

FIRE RAGES

Words: Nicholas Knight

Gener Ga

One of the biggest surprises of season six had to be the return of Mitch Pileggi as Sam and Dean's grandfather, Samuel Campbell. After all, he'd died back in the 70s, hadn't he? As it turned out, Samuel's reunion with the boys was far from happy.

The Official Supernatural Magazine met with Pileggi to find out more...



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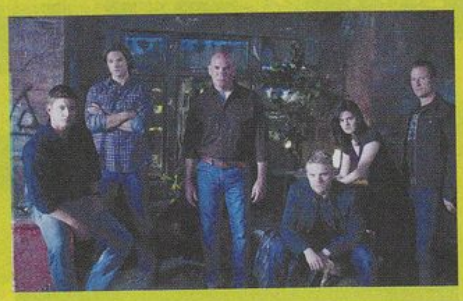


Before season six launched, casting news leaked out that Mitch Pileggi would be returning as Sam and Dean's grandfather, Samuel Campbell. Since Samuel *died* in 1978, and since even the Yellow-Eyed Demon that had possessed him was long dead, there was a lot of speculation as to *how* he'd be coming back for an arc on the show. Would he be a ghost? Would there be a bunch of episodes structured like the *Supernatural* novel *Heart of the Dragon*, where a past case of Samuel's ties in with a current case of the boys? Or would it be something else entirely? Surely some savvy fans – or lucky guessers – had a hunch that he'd be reincarnated, but even they most likely had no idea that he'd be brought back by the demon Crowley and sent on a secret mission to hunt Alpha monsters – and torture them for the location of Purgatory! And that was just the beginning... We discuss Samuel's season six character arc with Mitch Pileggi, and he tells us why he feels Samuel version 2.0 was tainted by his demonic rebirth.

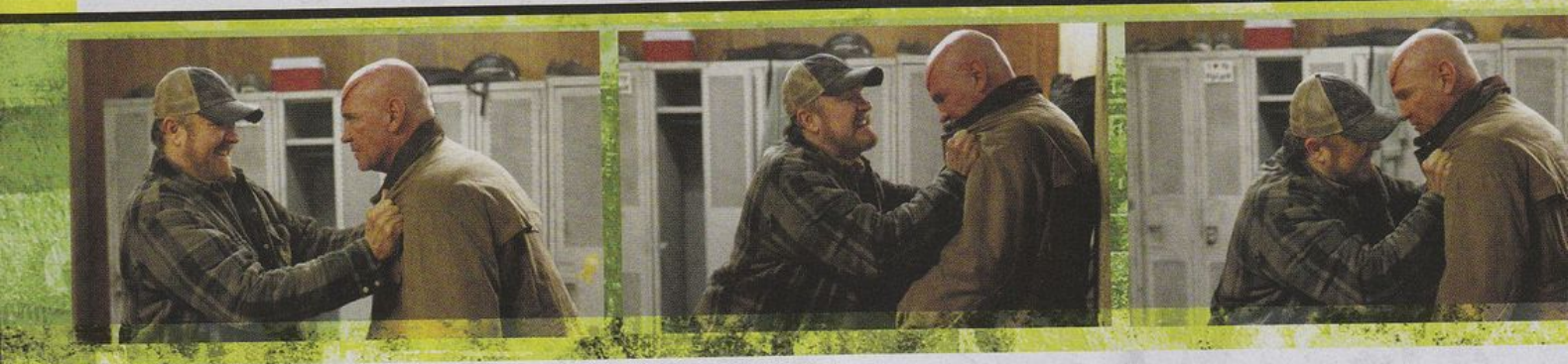
***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: In your first *Supernatural* episode in season four, *In the Beginning*, which was set in the past, your character *died*. After that, did you ever expect to return to the show?**
Mitch Pileggi: No, normally once I'm dead in something, I just kind of write it off. I guess for a show like *Supernatural* I shouldn't have.

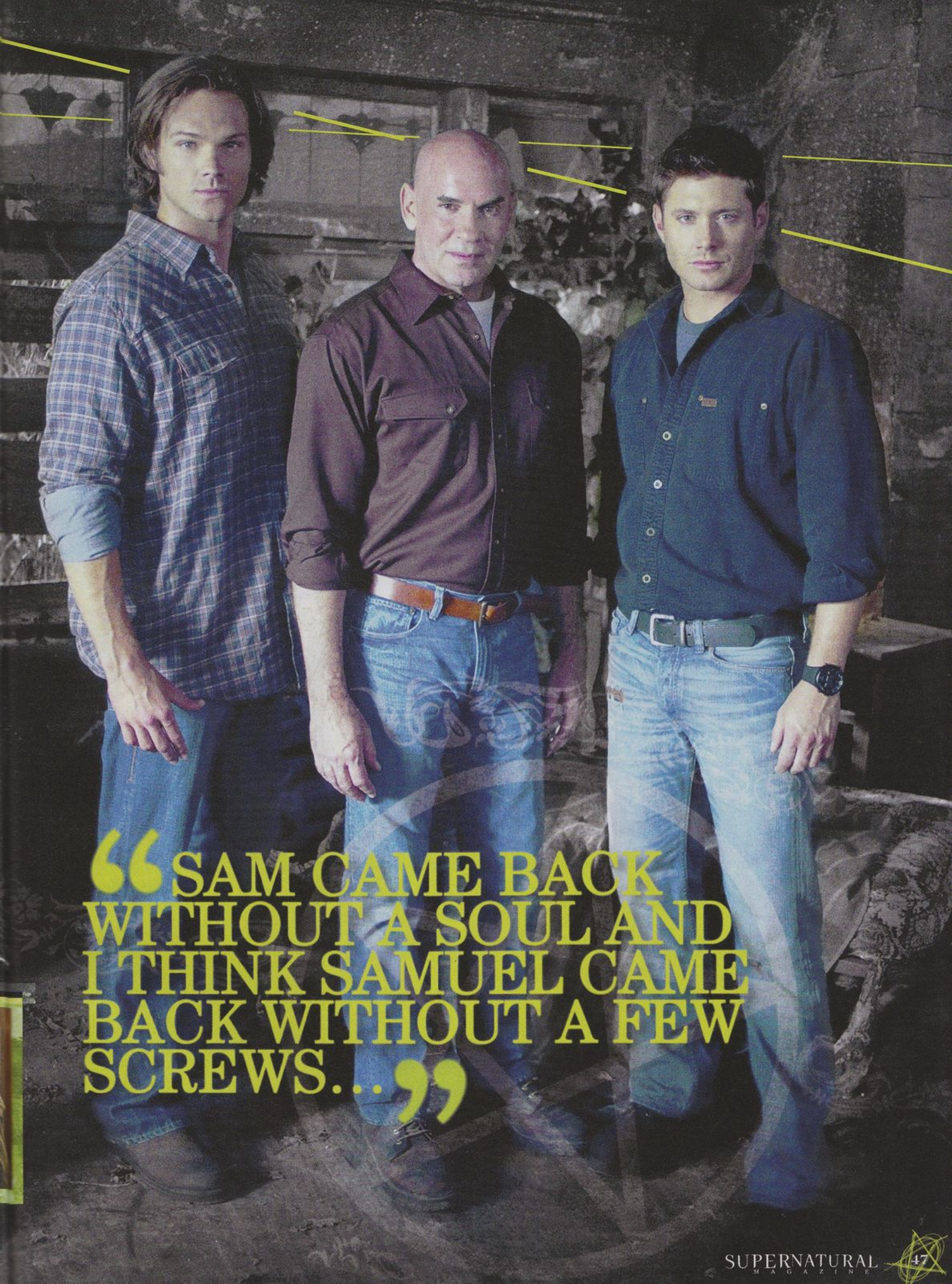
Did you know that you would be returning for seven episodes?
No, when Eric Kripke called me, he said that they wanted to know if I'd be interested in doing a handful of episodes playing Samuel and I of course said, "Absolutely!" At that point, it was halfway hidden; they weren't really specific about what they were going to do with the character, other than the fact that he had been brought back with Sam. So I didn't know how many episodes [there would be], and it actually went on longer than I thought it was going to go, which I was happy about.

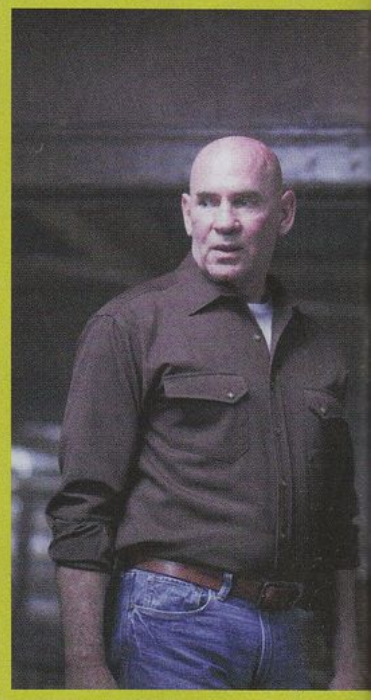
One of the things they did with the character was playing up how Samuel was like a fish-out-of-water, having died in the 1970s. Suddenly being thrust into 2010, he had to deal with computers and so forth. Was it fun to play that aspect of the character?
Yeah! It didn't pop up that often, but the few times that it did, it was fun going, "Huh?" Like at one point Sam says, "I'm tracking him on the GPS chip in his phone," and I'm like, "English? Please?" It was probably completely overwhelming for him to be brought back into this period overall. He was just like, "Whoa, what's going on here?"

A newborn baby might be thinking the same thing... and that goes double for a newborn shapeshifter who's just shifted for the first time, like in *Two and a Half Men*. We've heard it said that in the film industry you should never work with children or animals, so what was it like working with the baby in that episode?
Uhh, you mean Jared? [*Laughs*] That was interesting because we had several different babies and one of them was just *screaming*. At some point, Jensen looked up and was like, "We can't use any of this..." Fortunately they had another baby who they brought in who was just perfect. That's a tough business, working with babies, but we got it done.

Of course, the baby wasn't the only shapeshifter in the episode; you got to become one of those monsters as well. Was it tricky doing the scenes opposite yourself?
No, not really. They brought in a gentleman [who looked like me] who was wonderful and I would play to him. I'd actually worked with him before in Vancouver – who *haven't* I worked with in Vancouver? [*Laughs*] So he made it really pretty simple.




"SAM CAME BACK WITHOUT A SOUL AND I THINK SAMUEL CAME BACK WITHOUT A FEW SCREWS..."



But he didn't take a bullet for you! Or rather, he didn't take multiple tranquilizer darts for you. That was obviously you taking the hits. So tell us, how'd you shoot those darts out of your back?
They were hooked up to really thin nylon wire and when I straightened up, [a crew member] just yanked them all out. Which is a pretty simple method of doing it, but effective.

Instead of darts, did they yank your whole body on a wire for the scene in *The Unforgiven* when the Arachne monster threw you through the air?
No, they had a stunt guy do the actual throw, and then I had to throw myself against the wall, hit the wall, and go down. This body doesn't take long projections like that anymore! *[Laughs]* I try to keep things as simple as possible.

At one point in that episode, you were holding some of the fake spider web. Did it feel just as sticky and gross as the real thing?
It was kind of sticky and they wanted us to make it look like we were really struggling, that it was really strong webbing and we had to struggle to open it up. In fact, it broke apart pretty easily, so we had to be careful about touching it because it would just kind of fall apart.

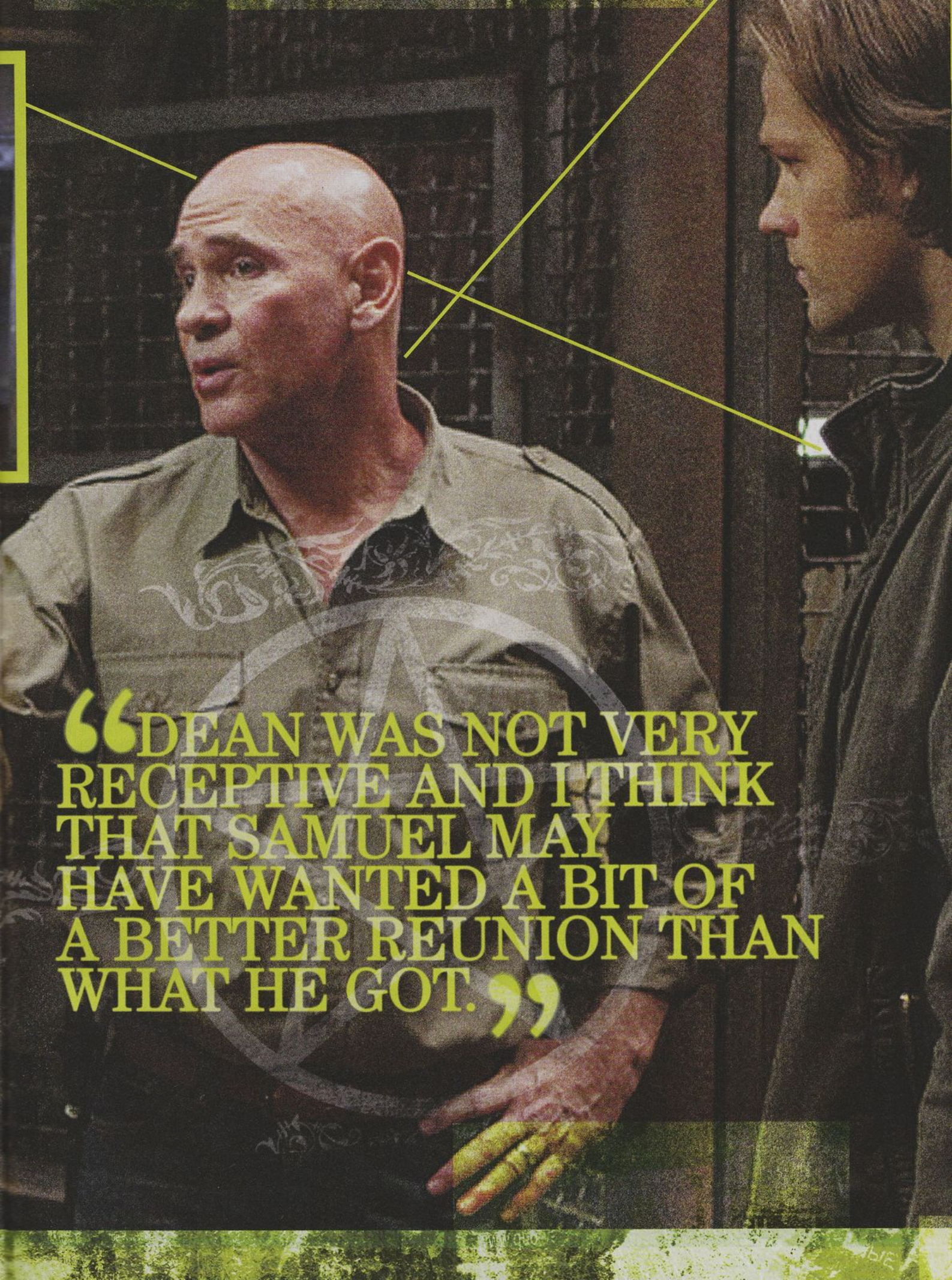
We hate to say it, but it almost seemed like Samuel was kind of falling apart himself, mentally-speaking. After all, how else could he live with himself and sleep "like a baby" after handing his own grandsons over to the King of Hell, unless he was out of his mind?
I was just saying to Sera Gamble that Sam came back without a soul, and I think Samuel came back without a few screws, because I think that his reasoning and the way he went about things was a little whacky. And I think that everyone picked up on that as well. I think that he was a completely different person than he was in season four. And he was out hunting with soulless Sam for a year before he came back into contact with Dean, so I think that a lot of Sam's behavior probably affected how Samuel's character developed for the rest of the season.

On the other hand, seeing how borderline evil soulless Sam acted at times, particularly before he was influenced by Dean, probably gave Samuel some justification for choosing his daughter over his grandsons.
Yeah, Samuel watched Sam – and some of the things that he did and the way he behaved and his lack of caring about anything – so when it came time to give him up, it was like, "I don't even know *what* Sam is, so I have no problem giving him up."

But Dean was clearly human and one of the good guys...
Right. You think about it and it's like, "*Okay*... he's sacrificing his *grandsons* to bring his daughter back, who's going to come back and go, '*What?*'"

Yeah, she would hate him for that, obviously.
Yeah, so it makes sense that people would go, "What is he doing? Why is he doing this?" Trying to figure these things out in my mind in order to play the character for the rest of the episodes was interesting.

Do you think Samuel was tainted by his demonic resurrection?
I think so. I think there was something amiss with his behavior. Another thing was that when he first came back into contact with Dean again, Dean was not


"DEAN WAS NOT VERY RECEPTIVE AND I THINK THAT SAMUEL MAY HAVE WANTED A BIT OF A BETTER REUNION THAN WHAT HE GOT."

very receptive and I think that Samuel may have wanted a bit of a better reunion than what he got. But that doesn't warrant him going completely haywire and turning his back on his grandsons.

But then his grandsons got their revenge in *...And Then There Were None*. First Sam shot you, then you got electrocuted. When you were electrocuted, did you actually have that black slime coming out of your nose and the slug creature coming out of your ear, or was that all done with visual effects?

They did actually have gook in me. They applied some gook in my ears and my nose. I refused to let them put the worm in my head, though, so they had to do that with CGI.

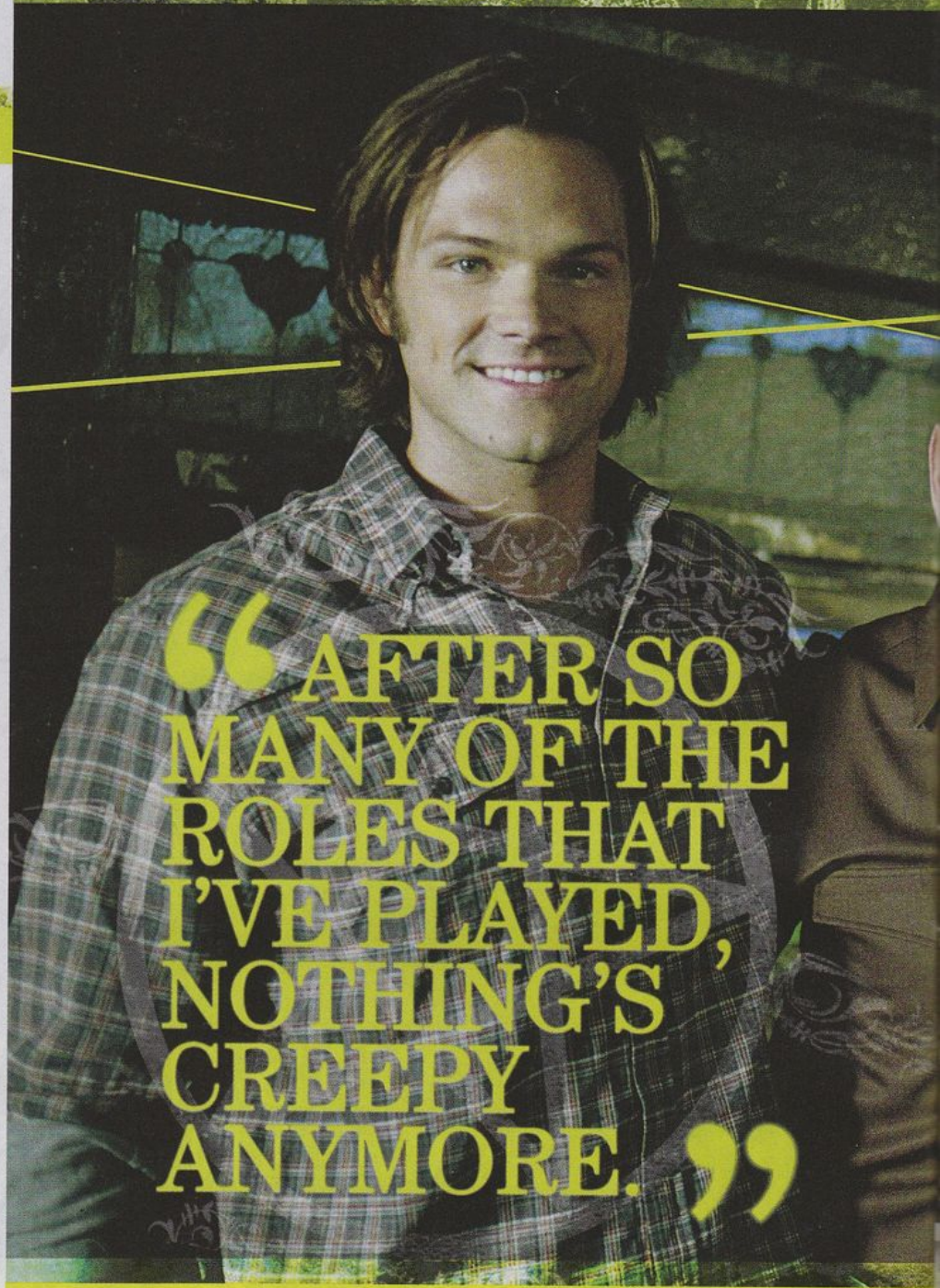
Speaking of CGI, what was it like watching your skull get cut into with a power tool? Was it creepy?

After so many of the roles that I've played, nothing's creepy anymore. I mean, it's interesting for me to watch it happen, but I thought it looked great.

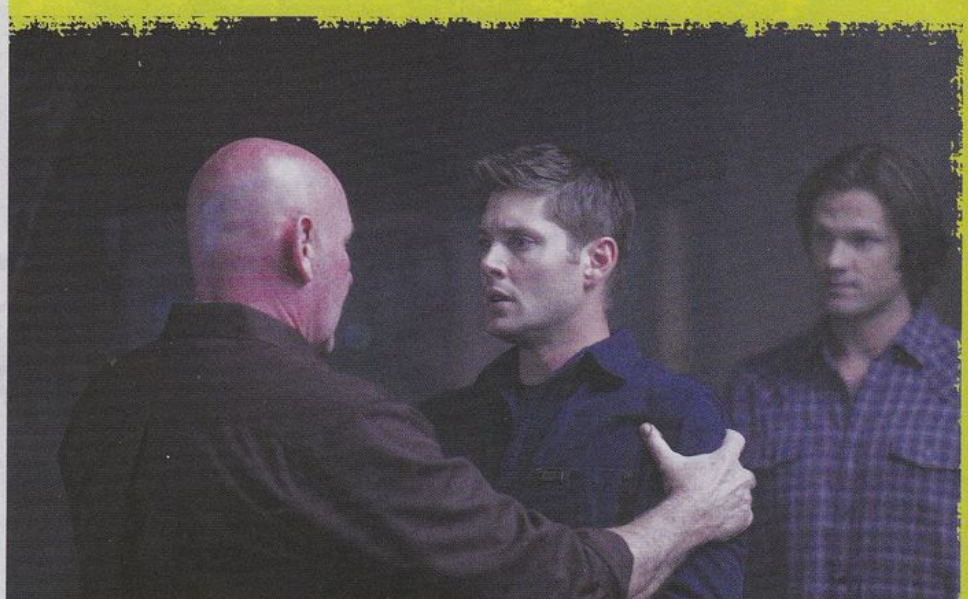
Both of your death scenes looked great, too.

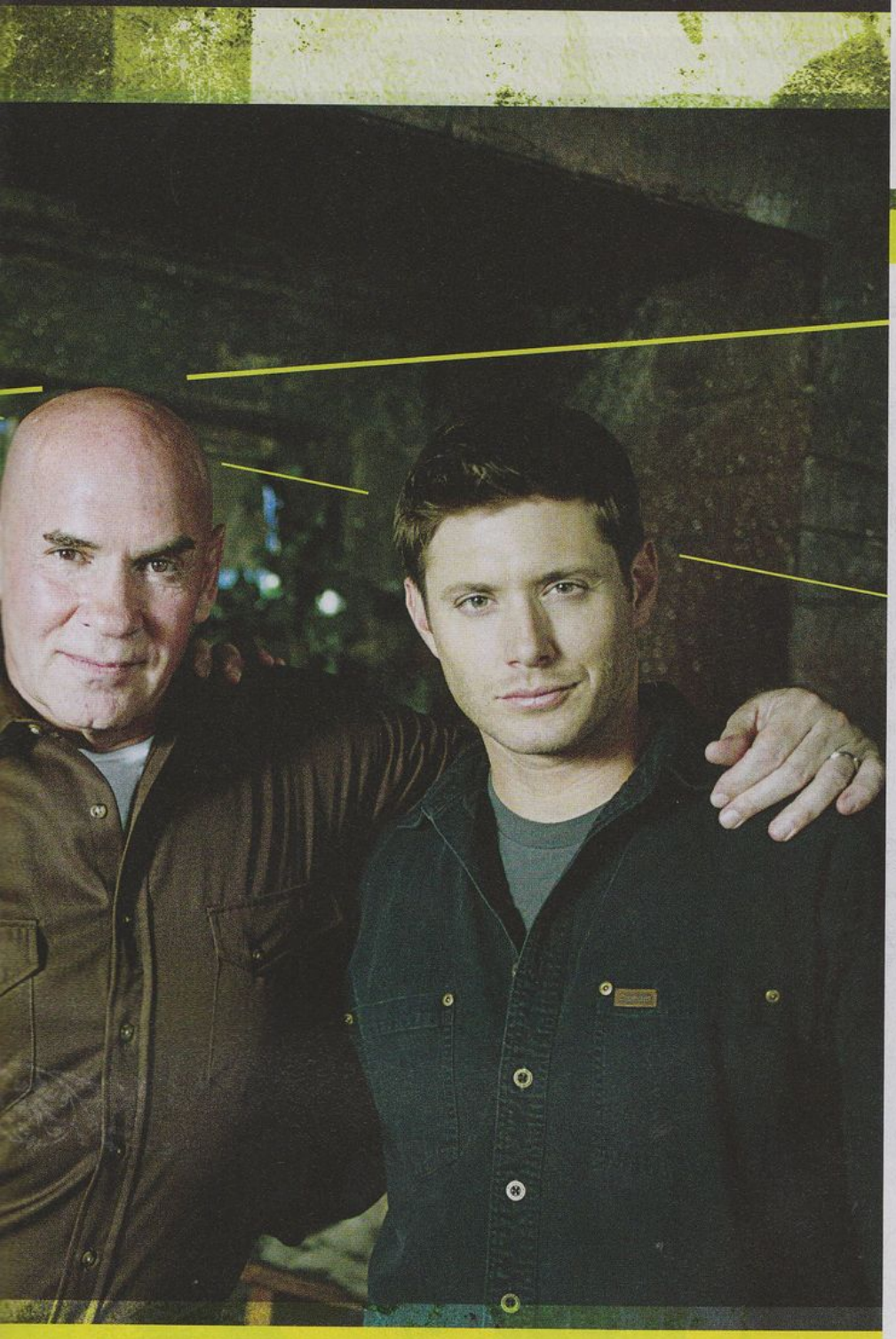
Yeah, when Jared shoots me in the head, I wanted [it to be like] when Deep Throat (played by Jerry Hardin) on *The X-Files*, got shot. When that character got killed, it was brutal. It was so simple, but it'd made such an impact on me because his body just went limp and hit the ground like a sack of potatoes. I'd wanted to try to copy that, and I was very happy with the end result. Because once I got hit with the bullet, my body just crumbled to the ground and hit pretty hard. I was very happy with the way it turned out.

Steven Williams, who played Rufus Turner, was also on the *The X-Files* as Mr. X. So was it fun getting into a fight scene with him?



"AFTER SO MANY OF THE ROLES THAT I'VE PLAYED, NOTHING'S CREEPY ANYMORE."





Well, Steven and I had gone at it before on *The X-Files*. He and I had an elevator fight scene that was pretty raucous, so it was kind of like old times for him and me to be going at each other. I was fighting both him and Jim Beaver, and it turns out I actually did an episode of *The X-Files* [*Field Trip*] with Jim some years ago as well. But as I've gotten older, the fight scenes have gotten harder. The body just doesn't do what it used to do. Even though I give it every bit of energy that I possibly can, it doesn't take the licks like it used to, which is probably because it's taken so many licks over the years! But as an actor, as a big kid, I still want to get in there and throw the punches and swing and all that stuff. It's just a lot harder hitting the floor.

After getting shot, sawed, and electrocuted, Samuel is finally dead... again. Having worked on the show for a fair portion of the season, was it disappointing when you found out they were killing you off?

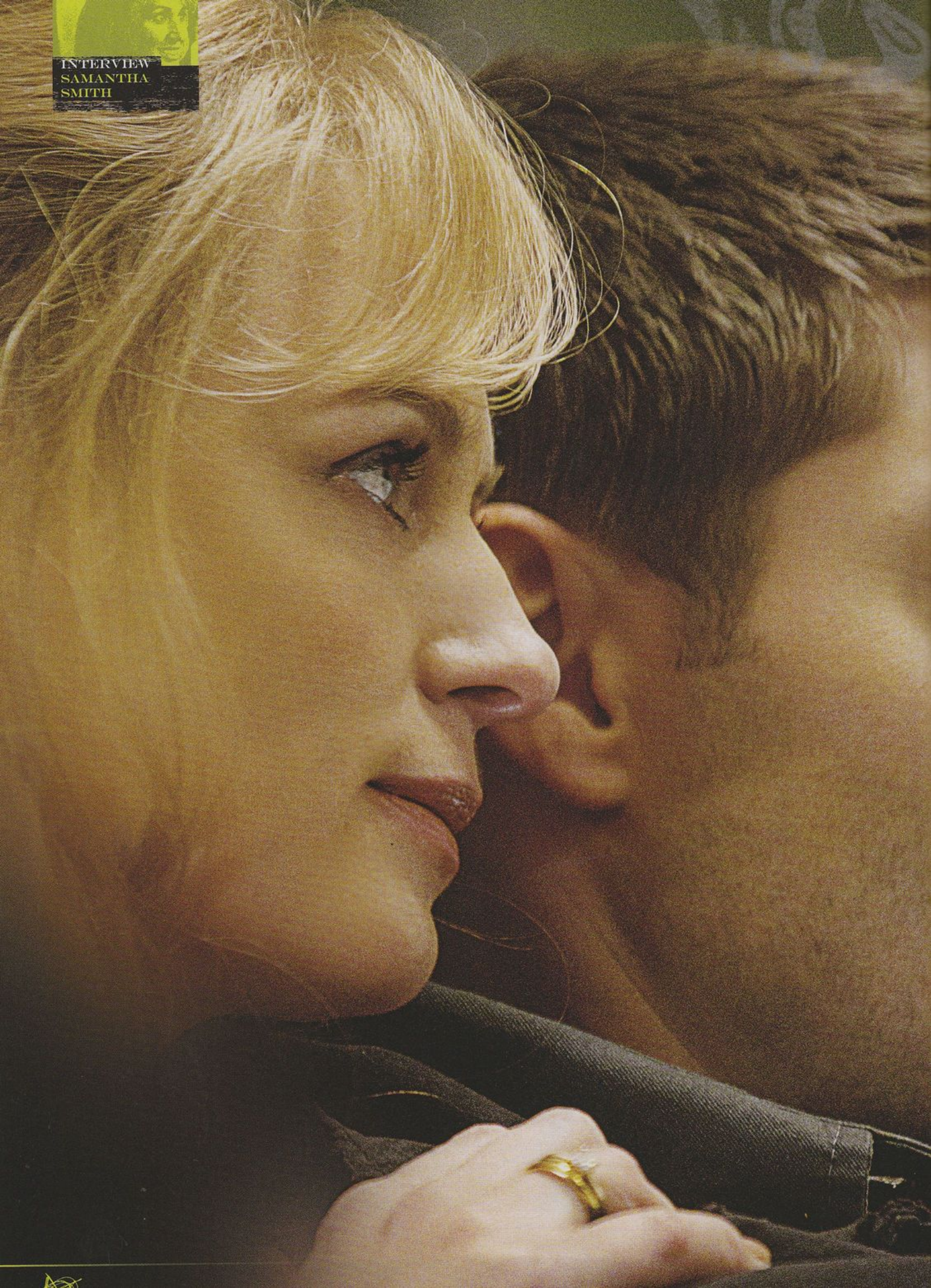
No, believe me, I was sad, but it wasn't unexpected, so it wasn't disappointing. It's just the way things are. It was an arc and I knew it was an arc. I'm sad not to be able to work with the guys and the crew and everybody on the show, but [in this business] when one thing ends, another thing starts.

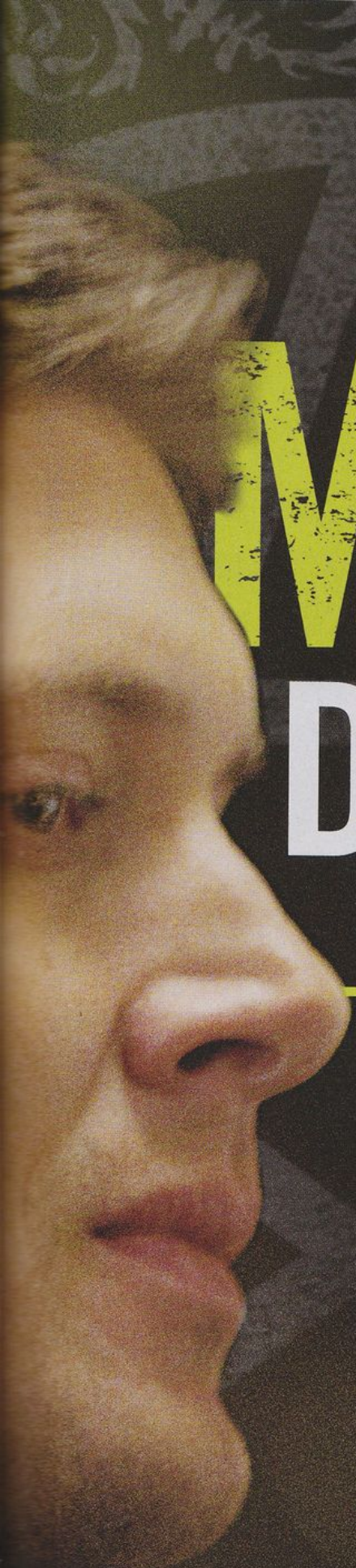
Of course, this *is Supernatural*, and they've already surprised you by resurrecting your character once. Do you think there's any chance they'll find a way to bring Samuel back again?

You never know.

Okay, well, let us put it this way: Do you think Samuel went back to Heaven, or do you think he went to Hell? Is Crowley going to turn him into a demon?

Let me just say, if I do come back, I would *love* to come back as a demon!





Words by: Jayne Nelson

MOMMY DEAREST

Another season, another cameo from Samantha Smith's Mary Winchester! *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with the actress who plays Sam and Dean's mom to find out what it was like playing the Mother of All Monsters in season six...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: Were you thrilled to be asked back on the show?**

Samantha Smith: Always, always. I love working with these guys. And honestly, every time they call me I'm dying to see in which way they have brought me back, because it's never what you expect! It's always a challenge. And this one was very different from any other incarnation of Mary that I have done before. It was really fun.

Had you been keeping up to date with the show? Did you know who Eve was?

I did know who Eve was – she actually was lovely, by the way. The actress' name is Julia Maxwell. I knew who the character was, and I'd had lunch with Eric [Kripke] a few weeks before. I didn't know what the part was going to be, and he explained it to me and I was thrilled. I thought it would be super fun – and I was correct!

Did you swap any tips for playing Eve with Julia?

Cont.

No, I wanted to play it differently, because I knew she was an incarnation of Mary, so I watched a little bit of what she had done as I didn't want to be completely different. Fortunately, she had a little bit of the same take on it that I would have, which was to not to try to be evil – you just were who you were and you were just saying evil things. So it made it easy for me to transition from the way she did it to a little bit more of a Mary spin on Eve's character.

The fact that Mary and Eve look so normal but they're both monsters helps! You can play it normally, but you're a really nasty thing...

Yes. Personally, as an actress, what's fun for me is that the more evil the character is, the nicer you play it. If you're an evil person, in some sort of arch horror movie [way], you don't think you're evil. You just have your purposes and they may be at cross-purposes to what everyone else in the world would like, but you feel perfectly justified. So you don't need to play it evil, you just play it like you would anything else. It's normal for you! And so... it makes it actually way more fun. To be sarcastic, to have a sense of humor. I think the best villains are funny!

Eve was actually just trying to protect her children... just like Mary. Did you pick up on that?

That was exactly why they had her change into Mary. Because [Sam and Dean] weren't believing her that she was protecting her kids, and that's exactly what she was doing, and to prove the point she incarnated into me. As opposed to just staying as this *thing*. I think the boys in the show are used to seeing evil creatures that look like normal people. It doesn't have an effect on them. What *does* have an effect on them is when something looks like their mother.

And that happens quite a lot, doesn't it?

More than I had any idea would happen! When I got killed in the Pilot I had no idea. I keep coming back in so many different ways!

So do you prefer playing Mary evil as opposed to the Mary from the pilot?

It's not that I prefer it – I actually love the Mary character, the archetypal mother. It makes it in some ways more challenging, as you don't want to play it sappy-sweet; you want her to be a real person, but at the same time she's become this archetype of what a pure, loving mother should be. There's a fine line there. Still having a sense of humor, still being a real person without being this Stepford Wife-y kind of person! [*Laughs*] There's much more juice and meat in somebody who has some evil drama going on.

"From having played Jensen and Jared's mom for so many years now, I have such a maternal feeling toward them."

You get some of the best lines, too!

Cont.

Oh yeah. I haven't gotten to say funny things like that before. There was the episode [*Dark Side Of The Moon*] when I came back and I was in Heaven, and it was an incarnation of me, but Zachariah had created me and made me evil. I had to say *horrible* things to Dean. That was really difficult for me, because there was no humor. It was slightly sarcastic, but it was bitter and it was just mean. And that was hard for me. But this character [in *Mommy Dearest*] was just so flip.

Mary/Eve got to call Sam a "simple little monkey!" How do you keep from laughing when you have a line like that?

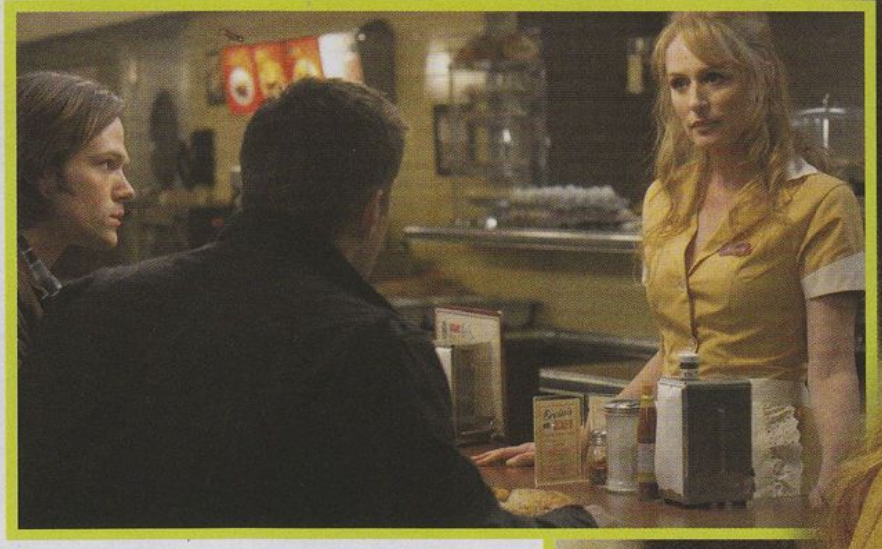
You get to rehearse a few times to get it out of your system! Jared's face, every time, was like, "Wow!" [*Laughs*] We laughed a lot. Particularly when we had to do the switch of me running in for Julia or Julia running out. It was funny. And then the black goo and the black marks on your face... when you're acting with somebody that's got special effects going on, it's hard to keep a straight face. It just looks so bizarre. And then I had to bite Jensen, with the blood... it was crazy! [*Laughs*] But it was all in a typical day's work on that show.

Was it fun biting him?

It was weird! First of all, I'm older than they are, and from having played Jensen and Jared's mom for so many years now, I have such a maternal feeling toward them. It's strange, because they certainly couldn't be my children, but I feel maybe it should be more big sisterly. But biting Jensen was just bizarre! It was just one little moment of acting. He made it very easy. I actually spoke to him about it. I was like, "Er, so this whole biting thing..." And he said, "This is what you do. I'm the expert at being bitten."

What does the fake blood taste like?

It's so sweet. It's basically just sugar syrup that's dyed red. I think I only had to do it once, actually, but other scenes in different episodes or shows, if you ever have fake blood in your mouth, it gets absorbed through your tongue and your gums and after five or six takes, you are flying on the sugar high! There's nothing you can do – it's not like you're swallowing it, it's just awful.



I don't eat a lot of sugar, and it kills me. I end up feeling like I've had seven cups of coffee!

Speaking of goo and such things – Eve had a nasty, bloody, gory death, but you didn't have to get covered in anything...

You know, in the script, it was going to be me. But in the shooting script they'd changed it. So I went up to Julia and said, "I see that they've changed it to you with all the black goo, and I'm really sorry, but I couldn't be happier! [*Laughs*] You can have the lovely death scene and I don't have to be wired up with all the tubes of black goo. You're younger. You'll recover faster anyway."

The whole wiring with the goo, and having it pour down over her eyes and into her mouth and her ears... Oh my God! And it was 2am in the morning or whatever it was, and she had to lie on the cold floor. She was a trooper. She's been a trooper throughout all of her episodes. Being out at night in a nightgown with no shoes on and freezing and having to stay with that calm voice... There were times where I was so cold I couldn't get my lines out because my teeth were chattering. And she had done that outside! I was very impressed. She was the consummate professional and such a sweetheart; she was lovely.

You remember there was a scene [in *...And Then There Were None*] where she was at a gas station and she had to get into a truck? I think

> **"What's fun for me is that the more evil the character is, the nicer you play it."**

it was something like 40 degrees F that night and she was outside in bare feet and that little nightie, and you would never have known. She didn't look miserable or frozen, and I'm sure she was!

Where did you film the diner scene? Was it in the studio, or out on location?

Where we filmed the diner scene was actually on location. It wasn't actually a functioning diner; it was more a fake town they'd built for something else [the movie *Watchmen*]. It was freezing! It was in a cold snap to begin with, and it wasn't really a real diner, so the doors were open and there was no heating except for these blowers, and you'd have to turn that off when you were filming, and there were thin walls. I'm sure in the summer it's sweltering as well!

On the plus side, at least you didn't have to wear that nightie again...

I was so happy! "Well, I have to be a waitress, but I don't have to wear a bloody nightgown!"

Do they have a special room in which that nightie hangs between your episodes?

They do, they do. They have a rack of them. Some are clean, some are cut, some have blood on them, some don't. It's kind of creepy, actually! You go in and you see ten of them lined up on a rack! It's become sort of a symbolic outfit of the show.

That and Castiel's trenchcoat.

And Bobby's hat! He was hatless in the last episode I watched, and it took me a second to figure out who it was!

Does it feel like going home after so many spots on the show?

A little bit. I've been back every year, apart from the one year [for season three] where coincidentally I was pregnant. And they write me something good every time. I always feel like I was just there, it never feels like any time has passed, and I'm always so happy to see everybody. You know, in all the shows I've been on, the way I feel it works is that it starts at the top, it starts with the executive producers and the stars of the show. Whatever tone they take, it trickles through to the entire set, including the guest stars and everyone else. They mess around, they have fun, they're respectful, they're talented and they work hard and have a good time while doing it. Misha is a crack-up, he's so funny, and the boys, of course, they work really hard, they stay focused and they're very sweet to me. And all the executive producers, from Eric on down, are lovely, lovely people.

Do you think you'll come back next year?

I never have any idea. You kind of think every year, "They'll come up with something," but I don't know. I always hope so! But with all this Heaven stuff going on, it's not unlikely that they could visit [Mary there] again. Who knows?

Perhaps the long-awaited guest appearance by Jeffrey Dean Morgan's John Winchester could happen...

That would be great. I actually haven't seen Jeffrey since the Pilot! I have other friends who work with him and we pass hellos back and forth through other people, but I haven't seen him. He's been working like a dog! But I think it would be fantastic if I could come back for one episode this [coming] season, and if he could come back as well, it would be perfect!

It could be a big one!

Exactly! There'll be explosions and fireworks and thunder. And buckets of blood!